

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1856.

TWO NUMBERS AND
COLOURED SUPPLEMENT } TENPENCE.

ENGLAND AGAIN AT WAR.

THE official document in which England formally declared war against Persia was promulgated in Calcutta on the 1st of November, and reached London by the last Overland Mail. The proclamation is a clear, positive, and satisfactory indictment against Persia, and will, we should think, bring conviction to the minds of all impartial persons who are not enemies of Great Britain, or who are not members of that Ultra-Peace party which deems all war, whether just or unjust, to be wrong and unchristian, that the Governor-General of India, under direction from her Majesty's Government at home, has acted both with wisdom and with promptitude in striking a blow for the independence of Herat. It may gratify the momentary whim and caprice of a powerful journal, acting under impulses which none can fathom, to deprecate this new war, and to express its "dark apprehensions" for the result. But when we find that it has no better grounds for its fears and objections than its ignorance, real or feigned, of the precise locality of that celebrated city, which is known to our foes and friends as "the gate of India," and its ignorance (certainly not real if it have perused the State paper signed by Mr. Edmonstone upon which it comments) of the reasons which have reluctantly compelled our Government to resort to hostilities, we can but hope that a public instructor of such high pretensions, and such undoubted influence for good or for evil, will ere long raise its voice in support of the bold

policy of those who have no ignorance of the state of India—of the vast importance of Herat as a key to our frontiers—of the bad faith of the Shah, the nominal head of a rotten and decaying empire, and of the Russian intrigues and agencies which have set the puppet in motion. Besides, the deed is done; and if Persia be supported by Russia, as there is but too much reason to suspect, it will need all the exertion and patriotism of the country to make the war a short, sharp, and decisive one.

The Crimean war is not so wholly a matter of past times that the country should forget its greatest lesson. If that war taught anything but the greedy ambition of Russia, and the generous bravery of the British people, it taught the folly of the Government of 1853 in hesitating when it ought to have acted. Clear-sightedness in discovering the danger and promptitude in meeting it, if displayed in the spring of that year when the haughty Prince Menschikoff was jingling his spurs and dangling his sword in the palaces of Constantinople, would, in all probability, have prevented the war which so shortly afterwards perplexed all Europe, and desolated some of its fairest regions, and which is not ended even yet. Our Indian empire is not surrounded by such cumbersome States and Governments, or held back by such wily diplomatists and conflicting interests and ambitions, as exist in Europe to paralyse the efforts of far-seeing and able statesmen and administrators. The great Asiatic question is a very simple one. Two European Powers, and two only, are in presence. The

Asiatic knows but the Englishman and the Russian. Even the great Napoleon of fifty years ago is not a Frenchman to the tribes and nations of the interior, but an Englishman. Whatever European is not Russian is English in their estimation; and whoever is not English is Russian. The enemies of our Indian empire—and they are neither few nor powerless—look to Russia to support them; and Russia—as everyone knows who has the slightest acquaintance, direct or indirect, with the affairs of India, and of the States that border upon it—is never loth to encourage or take part in intrigues against us. Russia is to be found at the bottom of every revolt against our authority, and her agents are continually at work to extend her influence and territory, at the expense of ours. Were it not for Russia the treacherous Shah of Persia would never have raised a finger against Herat; and were there no Russia in Asia striving against us, plotting against us—sometimes by artillery officers, sometimes by money bribes, and always by underhand intrigue—the possession of Herat by Persia would be of comparatively small importance. Were our Indian Government to sit quietly down to repudiate the engagements which in the interest of British rule in India it made both with Cabul and Herat, and tamely allow the city and territory of Herat to be annexed to Persia—that it might thereby please the *Times* (which affects not to know where Herat is), and that it might satisfy those English doctrinaires, at Manchester and elsewhere, who deprecate all war, and especially war with Russia—we might bid farewell to our Indian empire



CUTTING VESSELS OUT OF THE ICE AT CRONSTADT.—SKETCHED BY R. T. LANDELLS.—(SEE PAGE 615.)

ere the lapse of many years, and consign to the dominion of Russia the most magnificent appanage of power—the most rich and most splendid possession ever conquered and held by any nation of ancient or modern times. The possession of such a jewel in such a place, and amid such neighbours, necessitates a quick eye for danger, and a ready hand to meet it, from whence-soever it may come. With the command of the sea, the immense coast line of the great Indian peninsula is as safe from attack as the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland. There is but one vulnerable point in all our frontier, and that point is Herat, which commands the roads leading to the Khyber and the Bolan Passes, the only routes by which an invading army, speculating upon the hostility of any of the subject Princes or peoples of India, could penetrate or hope to attack us. The Indian Government, with a wise boldness, has confronted the danger. The expedition to the Persian Gulf is but the first move in the mighty game; and may, perhaps, render some other moves unnecessary. The greater the boldness of our Indian policy, the greater the chances of its success. British prestige lies in the daring and the energy of the British Government and people. Whatever the people may have done, the Government showed neither of these invaluable qualities in the Crimean war, and the nation reaped the natural consequences of its hesitation. It is fortunate that we have neither Gladstones, Newcastle, nor Aberdeens in India, or we might go through a worse experience than we suffered in Europe. But such a result, there is every reason to believe, will this time be spared us.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL NEWS.

THE WAR WITH PERSIA.

The followers of Mr. Urquhart, who have been trying to get up an agitation against Lord Palmerston for going to war with Persia without due formality, will find, from the papers received by the last Overland Mail, that they have been rather hasty in their conclusions. They will there find a copy of the proclamation of war with Persia, which was published at Calcutta on the 1st of November, by the Indian Government. The grounds upon which this step has been taken are the conduct of the Persian Government in invading the territory of Herat, which is said to constitute "an act of open hostility against Great Britain." The *Journal de Constantinople* of December 8 states that a Persian proclamation has been issued, accepting the war declared by England, and that the English have already taken possession of the Isles of Ormus and Karak. The Russian troops are concentrated on the Araxes. Letters have been received which allege that the Russian intervention will be carried into effect as soon as Prince Bariatski, the Governor-General of the Caucasus, shall have been officially informed of the disembarkation of the English at Bushire.

THE PARIS CONFERENCES.

It is said that the Conferences will commence some day next week, and that everything has been arranged in such a manner as to prevent their lasting long. The statement that Sardinia was wavering between the Russian and the English view of the question has been contradicted in the most express terms.

It is said that the points Russia will insist upon at the Conferences are the retirement of the British squadron from the Black Sea, and the evacuation of the Principalities by the Austrians. The Cabinet of St. Petersburg is understood to have addressed the Porte in most conciliatory language on this subject; saying that neither the Isle of Serpents nor the Bessarabian frontier difficulty should, so far as Russia is concerned, impede the execution of the treaty. The Porte is then urged to insist on a limited period for the retirement of any naval or military forces which may occupy his dominions by land or by sea. The Russian Envoy, it is said, will strongly insist on this point at the Conferences.

THE NEUFCHATEL QUESTION.

The quarrel between Prussia and Switzerland does not seem in the way of solution. The *Berlin Borsenhalle*, while it contradicts the statement that orders have been given for the mobilisation of the army, admits that such an order is likely to be given. "Every necessary measure is being taken to assume at the moment of action an attitude worthy of the position of Prussia as a great Power, but matters have not yet reached the point of requiring even the partial mobilisation of its force."

From an official explanation in the *Moniteur* of Wednesday, we learn that France is still ready to back Prussia in its demands. France, we are told, demanded the release of the prisoners at an early stage of the dispute, and represented that the honour of Switzerland would not be compromised by the step, as it would be granted at the solicitation of France, and not on the demand of Prussia. The concession became a sort of obligation, for France was acting in conformity to the views of Switzerland by preventing an appeal to arms, and making efforts to obtain a settlement from the King of Prussia. Unhappily these wise counsels were not appreciated. The advice of France was rejected by the Federal Government, which preferred gratifying the demagogic influences agitating around it to following friendly suggestions. The article concludes by saying:—"Switzerland, therefore, must not be astonished if, in the course of events, she should no longer find the good will which she might so easily have obtained at the cost of a very slight sacrifice."

The Paris correspondent of the *Times* says:—

The people discover in the article in the *Moniteur* a fling at the English Government, or at least at Lord Palmerston. The allusion about "demagogues" is thought to be to his address. Others believe that the attitude thus assumed by France will bring the quarrel to a speedy solution. Against Prussia and France what can Switzerland do? About two or three months ago the Emperor certainly took the Swiss view of the question. It was only after M. Hatzfeld had arrived at Biarritz with an autograph letter from the King that a change was perceptible. That change has gone on since then.

AMERICA.—THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

By the *Niagara* Royal Mail steam-ship, which arrived at Liverpool on Monday last, we have news from New York to the 3rd inst. Congress had assembled on the previous Monday, the 1st inst., and President Pierce's farewell Message had been laid before both Houses of the Legislature. In this document, which is characterised by the most thoroughgoing partisanship, the President commences by remarking that, in performing the constitutional duty of giving Congress information on the state of the Union, he does not do it merely to express his personal convictions, but speaks as the executive minister of the Government, called upon to scan impartially the interests of the whole country; the condition of these great interests and their steady progress in private and public well being attest the predominant spirit of intelligence which has characterised the American people.

Since the last Session a Presidential election has taken place, which was the explicit and sole act of the popular will, the sole sovereign authority of the Union. It is impossible to misapprehend the great principle which the votes of the people have sanctioned and sustained. They have asserted the constitutional equality of the States, and of the citizens, in whatever region they dwell, or wherever they received their birth; and they have proclaimed their determination to maintain the rights of all the different sections of the Union. In doing this they have condemned emphatically the idea of organising in the United States any mere geographical parties. The arguments put forth to justify such an organisation are then examined by the President at length, and the consequences to which it would lead, in the estimation of the Slave power, are portrayed in the most exaggerated terms.

The various attempts of the Free States to prevent the extension of slavery and other measures of a despotic nature are described by the partisan President as a series of aggressions against the constitutional rights of one-half the States. The question relating to the organisation of territorial Governments is then considered in connection with the Kansas question. The Message vindicates in strong terms the action of Congress in relation to the organisation of the Nebraska and Kansas territories, goes over the causes of the difficulties in the latter, which were, as Mr. Pierce falsely alleges, not the provisions of organic law, but the unjust interference of persons not inhabitants of the ter-

ritory. That interference, wherever it has exhibited itself by acts of an insurrectionary character, or of obstruction to processes of law, has been repelled or suppressed by all the means which the Constitution and the laws placed in the hands of the Executive; and the President states that he has no power to interfere in local elections to see to their freedom, or to pass judgment on the legality of the votes; he has no more power in the territories than he has in the States. If he had such power the Government might be Republican in form, but it would be a Monarchy in fact, and if he had undertaken to exercise it in the case of Kansas he would have been justly subject to the charge of usurpation and of violation of the dearest rights of the people of the United States. This portion of the Message closes by expressing the confident trust that, as the restored peace in Kansas has opportunity for wise legislation, either the Legislative Assembly of the territory or Congress will take care that no act shall remain on its statute-book in violation of the Constitution or subversive of the objects for which it was ordained, and will take all other necessary steps to assure to its inhabitants the enjoyment, without obstruction or abridgment, of all the constitutional rights of citizens of the United States, as contemplated by the organic law of the territory.

As regards foreign relations the Message is meagre, but not unsatisfactory. Not a word is said about the "Monroe doctrine," about the necessity of taking Cuba, or of the propriety of extending the influence of the Union in Central America. The questions at issue between England and the United States have either been settled, or are likely to be settled amicably, for which he takes due credit.

The thriving state of trade and commerce is dwelt upon with much satisfaction. In leaving the White House, after four years' occupation of it, Mr. Pierce hands over the concern to Mr. Buchanan in a highly flourishing condition. Trade and population are increasing at a flourishing rate. The National Debt is nearly extinguished; and there is a surplus of 18,000,000 dollars in the Treasury, which promises to rise to 22,000,000 dollars in a few months. Everything looks *couleur de rose*—if the troublesome Republicans would only keep themselves quiet, and let the Slave power do the governing of the nation at home and abroad.

The Message does not seem to have been well received by Congress. The northern members have spoken out warmly in defence of the Republican party, in reply to the attack made on them by the President. The debate had not come to a close when the mail came away.

THE GREAT GOLD ROBBERY.

On Saturday last Pierce, Burgess, and Tester, the three men charged with the extensive bullion robbery on the South-Eastern Railway, were again brought to the bar of the Mansion-house justice-room, for further examination. The court, as at the previous examinations, was crowded, and the interest evinced was intense. Mr. Bodkin, instructed by Mr. J. C. Rees, the solicitor to the company, again appeared for the prosecution. Mr. Wontner attended on the part of Pierce; Mr. Lewis defended Burgess; and Mr. Buchanan appeared for Tester.

Mr. G. D. Hazel, police inspector to the South-Eastern Railway Company, knew both Agar and Pierce, and had frequently seen them on the pier at Folkestone, and had strong suspicions of Agar, who was at that time going by the name of Adams. In consequence of what he saw he made a communication to Mr. Steer, the superintendent. He had a communication with the detective officer regarding Agar and Pierce about a fortnight after the gold robbery. He told that officer all he knew about them, and observed silence by his desire.

Several witnesses in the employment of the railway company, at Dover, gave evidence as to having seen two men carrying bags on the night of the robbery.

Stephen Jones, a guard in the service of the company, and who was guard of the 7.30 p.m. train from Dover in May, 1855, remembered, on one occasion, seeing Tester on the up platform at Reigate, in that month, with a black leather bag in his hand, and he afterwards observed him in a first-class carriage.

Mr. F. Russell, booking clerk at the London terminus of the Greenwich Railway, said: I know Tester, I remember hearing of the bullion robbery in the month of May, 1855, and I recollect Tester coming to our office in that month. It was about ten minutes past ten at night. The 7.30 train from Dover arrives at the London terminus at five minutes past ten. At this time Tester lived at Lewisham, and so did I. He came to the window of my office, and said to me, "Good evening, Mr. Russell." I replied, "Good evening, Mr. Tester." He then asked me if I was going home by the last Greenwich train, which started at twenty minutes past ten. I told him that I was. He then said that he had been to Redhill and back since office hours. I remarked to him that I thought it sharp work. He appeared rather excited, but seemed to congratulate himself upon being fortunate enough to catch the Greenwich train. He then opened the office door, and brought in a black bag, which he placed in a corner of the fireplace. Perry, the watchman, was in the office at the time of the conversation, but he left it before Tester came in. When Tester put the bag down he said he would return in a few minutes, and went away. He was gone about ten minutes. During his absence Perry returned, and asked me whose bag it was. I told him it was Tester's. It was a new bag, or nearly so, and was from 15 to 18 inches long. I had never seen it before. When he returned he took his bag and told me that he would join me at the carriage. He did so, and we went down in the same carriage. I have no recollection of seeing the bag after he took it from my office.

John Perry, one of the night watchmen at the London terminus of the Greenwich Railway, said: I remember hearing of the gold robbery last year. I recollect seeing Tester at our station one night, at about seven minutes past ten. It was in the month of May. About three or four days after this I first heard of the robbery. On the occasion to which I refer he walked to Mr. Russell's office, and said, "Good evening, Mr. Russell." Mr. Russell replied, "Good evening, Mr. Tester." He (Tester) said he had just come from Redhill. I did not hear anything more pass between them. He had a black leather bag in his hand. I left the office for a few minutes, and on my return I saw Tester's bag lying on the floor. I had occasion to lift it, for the purpose of getting at a small box. I cannot say its weight, but it felt very lumpy and heavy. I asked Mr. Russell whose bag it was, and he said it was Mr. Tester's. I made the remark to Mr. Russell—"It feels very heavy and lumpy."

Cross-examined by Mr. Buchanan: I have read the greater part of the evidence in this prosecution in the newspapers. I first heard of the robbery three or four days after I saw Tester at the station. I read an account in the newspapers of Tester bringing a bar of gold in a black bag, and that "freshened" my memory about the circumstance of the bag which Tester had left in the office. I then went to Mr. Russell, and told him that I thought it very probable that the bar of gold was in that bag.

Mr. J. P. Knight: I am out-door superintendent of the South-Eastern Railway. In 1855 I was deputy of Mr. Brown. I know Tester. He at that time was second clerk under me in the superintendent's office. Mr. Finnigan was a sort of assistant, or deputy superintendent, and lived at Tonbridge in the autumn of last year. It was his duty to make out the rota of the guards' duty. The card now shown me is the rota for the month of April, and the words "and May" have been added to it. These words are in the handwriting of Tester, who on the departure of Finnigan had charge of that department. Upon noticing the alteration, which made Burgess guard for May, I said I thought it was irregular; but Tester said it was of no consequence, and that it had been done before. I therefore took no further notice of it.

F. Williamson, the Metropolitan detective officer (who had been engaged with Sergeant Smith in assisting to unravel the mysteries connected with the robbery), was then called, and said: I accompanied Mr. Rees, the solicitor for the prosecution, to Pierce's house, and there found fourteen Turkish Six per Cent Bonds, three documents relating to the lease of a house, and some other papers. I also found a gold watch and chain and three seals (on the back of the watch were the initials "B. R. A.") and on the front a representation of Windsor Castle, two leather straps, a box containing tools, and two trunks.

After some conversation it was arranged that the prisoners should be remanded *pro forma* till Saturday (this day), and then till the Wednesday following (the 24th).

THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF THE KING OF NAPLES.—Letters from Naples of the 9th inst. confirm the information already given as to the slight nature of the wound of King Ferdinand. The assassin was executed on the 13th inst. Before his execution he confessed that he had acted in conformity with suggestions made to him, but he did not state the source from which these proceeded.

AN IMPERIAL BAPTISM.—The baptism of the newly-born son of the Grand Duke Nicholas took place to-day at the Winter Palace. At half-past ten the great dignitaries of the Crown, the Ambassadors, and the Ministers assembled in the great concert-room, and the Generals in St. Peter's Gallery, all accompanied by the ladies of their families, in the Russian costume. The ceremony commenced at eleven o'clock. The sponsors of the child were the Emperor, the Empress Dowager, Grand Dukes of Oldenburg and Michael of Oldenburg, Grand Duchess Maria Paulowna, and the Princess Theresa of Oldenburg.—*Letter from St. Petersburg, Dec. 7.*

COTTON IN ALGIERS.—Experiments of great importance in the cultivation of cotton are to be made in the next twelvemonth in the southern provinces. It is said that in the environs of Batna and Laghouat, in particular, extensive plantations will be made by the Arabs under the direction of the military authorities. The introduction of this species of cultivation amongst the natives will be highly profitable to them.—*Akbar.*

EPITOME OF NEWS—FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

It is said that Lord Hardinge was offered the appointment of the new Lord in Waiting, but declined it; and both Lord Raglan and Lord Suffolk are now spoken of as likely to be selected.

It is confidently stated that the French Emperor will pay his long-contemplated visit to Algeria in the spring.

At a meeting of the Carlisle Church of England Religious and Literary Institution, on the 9th inst., a graceful compliment was paid to the Right Hon. and Right Rev. the Bishop of London, by permanently connecting his name, as Vice-Patron, with the society which he had founded and nourished.

The King of the Belgians and the Comte de Flandres returned on Saturday last from the chateau d'Ardenne to Laeken.

A marriage was celebrated at the Hague, on the 9th instant, between Baron de Canitz and Baroness Groeninx Van Zoelen. The young couple are to leave shortly for Lisbon, where M. de Canitz has been appointed Minister of Prussia.

On the 12th inst. Lord Palmerston and Sir George Cornewall Lewis visited the collection of pictures which Mr. Sheepshanks has munificently placed at the disposal of the nation. The Premier and the Chancellor of the Exchequer subsequently inspected the Soulagé Collection at Marlborough-house.

Queen Christina, who arrived at Rome on the 5th inst., went to the Vatican on the 7th to pay her respects to his Holiness, who received her Majesty in a long private audience. The Queen was received on dismounting from her carriage by the Pope's Major Domo, and reconducted to the vehicle by the same dignitary.

The Emperor of the French and Prince Frederick William of Prussia left Paris at nine o'clock on Monday morning for Fontainebleau, on a hunting expedition. They were to sleep there that night, and to return to Paris next evening. Lord Cowley was among the personages invited to join the party.

A very handsome monument is about to be erected at Badminton, the ancient seat of the Somerset family in Gloucestershire, to the memory of the late lamented Lord Raglan, at the expense of the Dowager Lady Raglan.

Prince Jerome gave a grand dinner at the Palais Royal one day last week, at which Prince Napoleon, the Princess Mathilde, and Count de Kisseleff, the Russian Ambassador, were present.

Sir John W. Ramsden, Bart., M.P., has presented a donation of one hundred guineas to the prize fund of the Society of Arts, to be awarded to those candidates from mechanics' institutions and schools in union with the society who shall distinguish themselves at the society's examinations, which will be held in June next in London and Huddersfield.

The Archduke Maximilian of Austria, who is to marry the Princess Charlotte of Belgium, intends to visit the Belgian Court at Christmas. He was expected to arrive in Brussels in the course of the present week.

The Marchioness Dowager Conyngham has left England to pass the winter with Lord and Lady Londesborough, at their chateau, near Cannes.

Some changes, it is said, are about to take place amongst our diplomatic representatives abroad, but none which will affect the important missions of Paris, Vienna, or St. Petersburg.

The Poor-law Board have appointed Mr. John Lambert, of Salisbury, solicitor, to be a Poor Law Inspector, in the place of Mr. Hall, who lately resigned.

The Grand Duchess Constantine of Russia arrived in Hanover on the 9th inst., from Altenburg, and is residing at the Ernest Palace.

Mr. S. V. Surtees has been appointed Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of the Mauritius; and Mr. J. E. Romono, Puisne Judge of that Court.

An official announcement has been issued, stating that Marshal Radetzky and Count Giulay have received the first decorations of the new order of chivalry lately created by the Duke de Modena, the Eagle of Este.

Mr. G. Barne, of Grove-west, Upper Clapton, announces his intention of opposing Lord Palmerston at the next election for Tiverton.

Baron Alderson refused to allow tickets of admission to be issued to some ladies to the Chester Assize Court during the late trial of Jackson for the murder of his children.

Prince Carini, Ambassador of the Court of Naples to London, is at present in Paris on private affairs.

M. d'Aguiol, the confidential agent of the King of Naples, is again in Paris. He gives out that he has merely come on private business relating to the railways in which he is interested.

The salary of the Recorder of Bristol has, with Mr. Serjeant Kinglake's consent, been reduced £600 to £500.

The King of Sardinia has conferred the Cross of Officer of the Order of Maurice and Lazarus upon M. Martin, chef d'escadron in the French army, and author of "Military Studies on the Campaigns of the Piedmontese in Lombardy."

Mr. Roche, the traffic manager of the East India Railway, has tendered his resignation to the managing directors and agents in Calcutta.

The appeal case of M. Verdi against the judgment lately given in favour of M. Calzado, as to the right of performing certain of Verdi's operas at the Italian theatre, came on at the opening of the Appeal Court the other day, when the previous judgment in favour of M. Calzado was fully confirmed.

Parliament, which stood adjourned until Tuesday last, was formally prorogued on the afternoon of that day until Tuesday, Feb. 3, when it is to meet for the dispatch of business.

The Emperor of the French having, during his recent stay at Compiegne, observed the great damage done by rabbits in the woods and fields, has given orders that all the rabbits in the forests of the Civil List shall be destroyed.

The Bristol Corporation of the Poor, after a long struggle with the authorities of Gwydyr House, Whitehall, to prolong an independent existence, is about to succumb, and held its penultimate meeting last week.

A plan for enlarging Vienna, by throwing down the ramparts which separate the city from the thirty-two suburbs, is about to be submitted to the Emperor; but it is not likely to be accepted, although approved by the Archdukes William and Leopold.

The first annual exhibition of the association recently established in Scotland to encourage the application of art to objects of ornament and utility, was opened at Edinburgh on Saturday evening last by a brilliant and fashionably-attended *conversazione*. The exhibition is to be an annual one, alternately in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

It is decided that the railway from Frascati to Rome is to be brought within the walls of the city without delay, and a station erected near the Coliseum. The works will be commenced as soon as the chief engineer arrives.

In the year ended the 31st March last the duty on tobacco and snuff was £5,006,699. In the preceding year the duty was £4,773,555.

In consequence of a large reduction in the budget of the French marine, a great number of workmen are about to be discharged from the naval arsenal of that place.

The annual collection for the Irish Catholic University was made on Sunday, at the several Roman Catholic chapels in Dublin. The amount at one chapel alone (that of Marlborough-street) was £229.

The Russian General Philipson is said to have retaken Soujouk Kaleh from the Circassians, after a gallant defence.

No crosses of the Legion of Honour will be given in France this year on the occasion of New Year's-day, in consequence of the great number of decorations lately granted.

A number of the magistrates of Devon, and other benevolent gentlemen, have determined on building a commodious reformatory institution for females near Exeter. A large sum of money has already been obtained, and the work will shortly be commenced.

A letter from Aden states that the English force sent to collect guano on the Kuria Muria Islands has been compelled to leave the island by an overpowering force of Arabs.

It is said that the Cunard Company will run a semi-monthly line of screw steamers between Liverpool and Quebec during the ensuing spring and summer. This, with the line already in existence, will give a regular weekly steam communication between the ports named.

The nine French prisoners who escaped from Cayenne have arrived in New York, but in the most destitute and suffering condition. There is some talk of a movement to raise funds in their behalf.

The Rev. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Canon of Canterbury Cathedral, has been appointed to the office of Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford, vacant by the decease of the Rev. Robert Hussey.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE American President's Message is not thought so generally interesting as the message delivered to the Queen, on the deck of the *Resolute*, by the gallant American Captain Hartstein, who, in restoring that vessel to her Majesty, said that the present was made "not only as an evidence of a friendly feeling to the Queen's sovereignty, but as a token of love, admiration, and respect to her Majesty personally." The Queen's gracious smile, and "I thank you, Sir," were fitting responses; and thenceforth hospitalities, not yet terminated, began to cement the acquaintance so auspiciously begun: the Captain dined and slept at Osborne, £100 was given among the crew, and various entertainments in honour of our visitors were arranged.

On Tuesday the formalities for adjourning Parliament until Tuesday, the 3rd of February, were gone through in the House of Lords, in the presence of the Chancellor and some officials. The secret as to what "business" the Legislature is to be asked to "dispatch" is well kept by the Government, Sir R. Bethell alone having revealed any of the intentions of Ministers, and he having told nothing that might not easily have been guessed at. The use of the word "urgent" in reference to matters not to be taken up for nearly two months occasioned some remark from those who like to see the right word in the right place.

The execution of Marley, who murdered poor Cope, in Parliament-street, took place on Monday. The man "died as erring man should die," that is, without cowardice or bravado. Some ruffians in the crowd raised brutal outcries, possibly to dispel the impression which the terrible lesson was making upon them, but the yelling is over and the memory of the lesson abides with them, and will abide through many a dark night, and while they are prowling in search of prey. The vindication of the law has given general satisfaction, and, had there been any attempt to prevent it, a remonstrance which no Home Secretary would like to receive would have come forth from the real public, usually content to remain quiet, and to leave the execution of the law to those intrusted with the duty. But Marley's case was almost too bad even for the Manchester organs. Mr. Baron Bramwell, at Maidstone, reproduced on Wednesday the hint which we have more than once offered for the benefit of jurors who have conscientious objections to the punishment of death. He intimated that such persons might do well to keep out of the jury-box, but that if they were sworn to find a verdict according to the evidence, and found one with reference to the possible result of their finding, that is, if they voted "Not Guilty," because "Guilty" meant gallows, they were perjured men. Of course there is no escape from this fact; but we believe that some persons who hold the views in question are courageous enough to say that they know that they are perjured, and that they prefer taking their choice of crimes and being perjurers rather than murderers. The small amount of reasoning power which Providence has confided to a man who can talk such nonsense ought certainly to disqualify him from impeding the administration of justice by his presence in any jury-box whatever.

The Metropolitan Central Board is about, unless checked, to indulge in one of those vagaries which are excusable only on the supposition that the members are ashamed of their do-nothingness. Remarkably unlike "wisdom," they nevertheless wish to "cry aloud at the corners of the streets." Having made the notable discovery that there are a great many streets in London bearing the same name, and consequently requiring a second title to indicate them (as Tavistock-street, "Covent-garden," and Tavistock-street, "Bedford-square"), they propose to rechristen all but one of each of these. The committee appointed to deal with the subject have busily ransacked their biographical dictionaries for names, and in a few cases have selected a name of such world-wide fame that the public would at once pay attention to its allocation—for instance, King-street, Covent-garden, in which the Garrick Club is, will, if the Board have its way, be called Shakespeare-street, and everybody will speedily know the way to the Garrick Club. But this quality will not apply to many of the names, and a second title will be wanted for at least four-fifths of those appertaining to men whom the educated world recognises, but whom messengers and cabmen—the people to whom street-names are chiefly useful—are not bound to know. Akenside, Wycherley, and Jacquard, will be strange sounds to driver 32,987; and if you have to tell him "Jacquard-street, Manchester-square," what is the use of the change? Let us add that a number of members of the Board have desired to give their own illustrious names to streets; and also that some vulgar and ridiculous suggestions have been made indicating the class of society whence the sponsors come.

The Postmaster-General has been taking a long-meditated step in reference to the metropolitan delivery of letters, and a circular from the Post-office has this week been left by the postmen. Desirous, of course, to render assistance in promotion of the object in view, we would impress upon our London readers that all that is asked of them is to find out which letter (or two letters) of the alphabet, out of five, may belong to their London residence. That is, they have just to discover whether they are in the South-Western, or North-Eastern, or Northern, or other district. The paper left at the houses contains the information, which is also to be obtained at any post-office, and from the "Postal Guide." Having ascertained this, append, for the future, to your address, when writing to anybody (and, if you please, put upon your card), the initials in question, and they will then be used by your correspondents. For instance, when Miss Fitzmarmaduke, of Warwick-street, Piccadilly, is writing to a friend, if she can so far forget her sex as to date her letter at all, let her be so kind as to put "Warwick-street, S.W.," and the reply, if similarly directed, will be rapidly forwarded to that one of the "Ten Towns" into which Mr. Rowland Hill has divided London. No one who does not understand the machinery of the Post-office can comprehend how much will be gained by compliance with this simple requisition; but we trust that everybody will comply with it, whether comprehending the advantage or not, for it is another kind of reform to that proposed by the M.C.B.—the Meddlesome Chatterbox Bumbles.

We should like to call attention to the proceedings of an association of which we know nothing whatever except from published reports, but which appears to us to deserve any assistance the press can give it. We allude to the proposed College of Dentists, whose second meeting has been held this week. If we understand aright the intentions of the promoters of this plan, it is to remove dental surgery as far as possible out of the hands of the ignorant and impudent quacks whose advertisements literally set the teeth on edge, and to insist upon the dentist being a regularly educated gentleman, taking similar footing in professional society with the surgeon and physician. Considering the constant recourse we nearly all have to the dentist, the delicacy of most of his operations, and their importance to comfort and health, and considering also that anybody with assurance and a strong wrist may hang out his false teeth, and torture as many victims as puffs, low fees, and quackery can seduce into his den, it is time that the real profession should bestir itself. The truth is, and the world

should know it, that no one is fit to be a dentist who has not had a surgical education, and any one practising it without this is a quack who ought to be treated as a mischievous criminal.

CHESS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. AUGUSTA, Maine, U.S.—Your obliging communication has safely reached us. Accept our acknowledgments, and the following replies to the queries submitted:—1. Your solution of E. B. C.'s Problem, No. 664, in two moves is a true bill. 2. The magazine mentioned is defunct, but will, probably, be revived in the spring. 3. Tomlinson's "Chess Annual" for 1856 can be procured through any bookseller, price 6s. R. M.—No news of *La Régence*. Your best course, as we before advised, is to apply to the publisher or editor.

H. C. B.—1. We do not understand the game. 2. It is, probably, a misprint. You should procure the "Chess-players' Handbook," by the same author. The small work named is adapted only for the very youngest players.

T. W. SMITH.—Stalemate makes a drawn game. THE WRITER.—A player can have two or more Queens at one time on the board, as we have patiently repeated at least a hundred times.

A SECOND-RATE wishes to engage in fifty games of Chess by correspondence. Address, Omega, 16, Spencer-terrace, Lower-road, Islington.

BIBLIOPOLE.—Twiss has scraped together a goodly number of anecdotes and allusions relating to Chess from old books, but his reading was not extensive enough to exhaust the subject. At least as many more might easily be garnered by any one thoroughly up in old French and English literature. Your quotation is from a fto, intitled "Sivqlia: Too Good to be True," &c., &c., 1590."

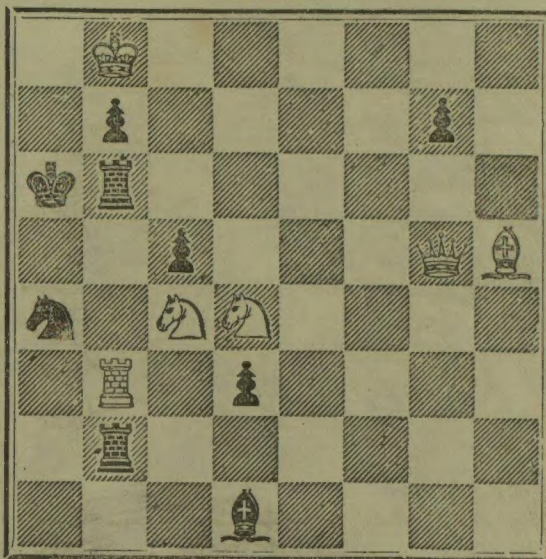
SOLUTIONS OF PROBLEM No. 663, by J. E. P., W. S. H., F. P., W. Shelden, Aquitain, M.A., Bushey, P. C. G., H. D., Katharine, F. R. Crampton, N. H. M., W. R. C., R. D., G. T. D., Omicron, Wolfe, Brooke, D. G. Beidan, Murdoch, Czarina, Vicar, J. M. F., B. K., Regent, L. S., Tumkin, Etoulan, Percival, Judy, J. Russell, Sergeant of Artillery, are correct. SOLUTIONS OF PROBLEM No. 669, by F. P., Aquitain, P. C. D., Wolfe, Bunny, T. J. of Hanworth, B. K., I. de Rixton, F. R. of Norwich, J. Russell, Sergeant of Artillery, F. R. Crampton, Julius Manning, Ngami, Regent, Omicron, Pedlar, B.A., Czarina, Alpha, Stultus, Lynx, F. P., C. F. H., Grantham, Bumpkin, Fredk. R., Simple Simon, Amateur, Subscriber, Quid-nunc, Peterkin, are correct. All others are wrong.

* Several notices to correspondents are unavoidably postponed.

PROBLEM No. 670.

By HENRY TURTON.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play, and mate in four moves.

THE GREAT CHRISTMAS CATTLE-MARKET.

THE great Christmas Market, held on Monday last, for the second time, in Copenhagen-fields, more than confirmed all the favourable opinions that have been expressed of this spacious and well-arranged establishment. From first to last there was neither confusion nor crowding. The vast army of beasts (marked at seven o'clock a.m. on the market-board at 7129) were arranged in streets, with their heads in double rows towards the dividing lanes, and firmly tied to the rails, in a manner that enabled them to stand comfortably, and all customers to see and examine them completely, with the utmost ease, without disturbing them. The cattle were driven to the market from the railway stations or the suburbs by the broad avenues, and were put into their places almost as easily as a regiment of newly-embodied militia. The same was the case with the sheep (16,000 in number); and the only case of injury we observed in the whole market was one ox with a broken horn. Every cattle-salesman stood at the tails of the beasts under his charge, and was able at once to point out an animal he could recommend to a particular customer, or to name a price for several, without the horrid crushing, confusion, and head-beating of old Smithfield. Indeed, at half-past eight o'clock the Copenhagen Market was quite as quiet and orderly as the Royal Exchange, and required no further protection from the damp than a stout pair of shoes.

Shorthorns and their crosses were by far the most numerous, and next to them Herefords—judging by the colours as surveyed from the upper windows of one of the taverns. It was computed that there were about 1500 Highland and Polled Angus Scots, which fetched the topmost price of the market. We particularly remarked three black Polled Angus, marked as having obtained the Duke of Richmond's prize in Scotland, on his Gordon estates. Prince Albert had about a score of useful Shorthorns, descending in size from a vast bullock to a small fat heifer: £55 was asked for the biggest of the lot. The Herefords looked as well as any of the large beasts. We noted a lot of six very large and fat ones from that grass farm near Rugby, watered with sewage manure, to which reference was made at the Society of Arts' discussion last week. For a big Hereford £40 was commonly asked. Of Devons there were between 700 and 1000; and nothing looked better; for quality they undoubtedly stand next to the Scots. Almost all the British beasts showed a high average condition, which is the result of long-continued encouraging high prices, and the extended cultivation of root crops. Very like Devons, but taller and coarser, were a full supply of Red Sussex oxen, some of them prepared by several years at the plough, of monstrous, if not largely profitable, size; for Sussex is one of the benighted counties where eight oxen may be seen turning up a soft soil three inches deep; or, as it has been well described, four old oxen playing at ploughing, and four young steers being taught to do the same. Still these Sussex are a very nice breed, and it is a pity there are not more of them. The Smithfield Club, in future, will give them a separate class and special prizes, and we shall see what that will do for them. Prizes, as we before observed, brought only three Welsh Runts to Baker-street, but the [midland counties] graziers sent some hundreds to market, which were among the best looking and earliest sold of the live beef. Ireland sent some good animals, chiefly of the Shorthorn strain; but Liverpool is the great market for Irish fat stock. The worst-looking animals in the square were Black and White Dutch, chiefly dry cows and heifers. The importation of foreign cattle declines steadily, but we may expect from the attention paid to breeding an early and decided improvement in quality.

Of sheep there was a short supply, for some unexplained reason, to the extent of between seven and eight thousand. The Cotswolds, commonly called Gloucesters, were among the finest large sheep, and were all got up nicely in their well-washed white fleeces. Pure South-downs were short in number; but there were plenty of all the large Down crosses so much in favour between Hants and Oxfordshire; and we noted some very useful, although rather coarse, Dutch sheep, which appear to have benefited in form from Leicester crosses, although still retaining the coarse head, much like the old Romney Marsh sheep. A few little horned Welsh sheep looked curious beside modern improved breeds.

The Clock Tower basement of the New Market is tenanted not only by barbers, but by a druggist who seems to drive a roaring trade, and a vendor of secondhand Crimean sheepskin coats, wrappers, and comforters. They are much needed by those who have to stand about the cold, wind-exposed Copenhagen-fields. Two only of the several taverns built seem to be occupied; of course, these were crowded by early travellers. There seemed quite as much tea and coffee consumed as ale or spirits. In a word, the salesmen and drovers, under the influence of the new arrangements, do their spitting gently; and those whom curiosity may tempt to this great mart will find nothing to annoy or disgust, and much to interest them.

COUNTRY NEWS.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AT THE HIGHFIELD HOUSE OBSERVATORY, NEAR NOTTINGHAM, FOR THE WEEK ENDING DEC. 16, 1856.

| Month and Day. | Corrected Reading of Barometer at 9 A.M. 151 feet above sea level. | Thermometer. | | Mean Temperature of the Day. | Rain in Inches. | Mean Temperature of Wet Bulb. | Evaporation in 24 Hours. | Amount of Rain. | | Amount of Cloud. |
|----------------|--|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
| | | Highest Reading. | Lowest Reading. | | | | | In the Night. | In the Day. | |
| Dec. 10 | 29.075 | 54.5 | 44.0 | 49.0 | 0.222 | 47.9 | 48.0 | 0 | 0 | 9.4 |
| " 11 | 29.312 | 49.8 | 39.9 | 45.2 | 0.040 | 44.3 | 43.8 | 3 | 0 | 9.0 |
| " 12 | 29.071 | 49.6 | 40.0 | 45.2 | 0.320 | 43.5 | 42.9 | 9 | 1 | 7.5 |
| " 13 | 28.724 | 44.2 | 35.0 | 39.3 | 0.008 | 37.5 | 37.6 | 8 | 1 | 7.2 |
| " 14 | 29.390 | 46.5 | 36.5 | 41.9 | 0.000 | 40.1 | 39.5 | 3 | 0 | 6.5 |
| " 15 | 30.191 | 42.0 | 28.5 | 34.7 | 0.000 | 31.6 | 32.0 | 8 | 1 | 6.0 |
| " 16 | 30.441 | 35.0 | 25.0 | 29.7 | 0.000 | 28.8 | 29.1 | 1 1/2 | 1 | 6.0 |
| Mean | 29.453 | 45.9 | 35.6 | 40.7 | 0.590 | 39.1 | 39.3 | 4.6 | 0.6 | 7.4 |

The range of temperature during the week was 29.5°.

The weather on first three days rainy, then fine and colder.

The direction of the wind was S.W. and S.S.W. until the evening of the 12th, when it became W., changing again in the night to S.W.; on the 13th, at 3 p.m., to N.W.; evening of 14th became N.; during the morning of the 15th moved between W.N.W. and N.N.E., becoming due N.W. at 9 a.m.; changing at 5 p.m. on 16th to W.S.W.

Lunar halos on 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th.

A fine meteor at 7h. 18m. 30sec. p.m. on 13th; moved from S.Auriga, fading away 8° above the moon.

E. J. LOWE.

SOUTHAMPTON ELECTION.—All attempts to heal the divisions amongst the Liberal party in Southampton have failed, and both sections have declared for war. It is not now doubted that Sir Edward Butler, a Conservative, and Messrs. Weguelin and Andrews, Liberals, will go to the poll, and that the contest will be one of the fiercest ever known. The address of Mr. Richard Andrews, the Radical coachmaker, and Mayor, was issued on Monday. After stating his views, Mr. Andrews says to the electors:—"If they meet with your approval, I am your man. I have not sought this position; but, being in it by the kindness of so large a number of friends who have not deserted the good old cause for which we have so often struggled together, I pledge you my word that negotiation is now at an end, and I am resolved to poll to the last man."

THE MANCHESTER ART-TREASURES EXHIBITION.—The executive committee announce that they will be prepared to issue season tickets for the forthcoming Exhibition on and after the 1st of January, 1857. The committee are induced to make this early appeal for the support of the public in order that they may be enabled more economically to meet the heavy pecuniary demands which the magnitude of the undertaking involves. The season tickets, not transferable, will be of two classes:—1st, a ticket, price £2 2s., entitling the proprietor to admission on all occasions when the Exhibition is open to the public; 2nd, a ticket, price £1 is, entitling the proprietor to admission on all occasions when open to the public, excepting only on a limited number of days (not exceeding eight), reserved for state ceremonials or special attractions. It is said that the Queen will honour the Exhibition with a Royal visit, and thus further evince her Majesty's most gracious desire to encourage this great national and educational undertaking. The committee are empowered to state that his Royal Highness Prince Albert has expressed his intention of honouring the opening ceremonial of the Exhibition in May next with his presence.

THE NEW EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT.—On Monday last a meeting was held in York Chambers, King-street, Manchester, for reconsideration of the resolutions adopted at a conference held by a few of the leading educationalists of that town with Sir John Pakington, M.P., on the 19th ult., and further considered, amended, and confirmed at a larger meeting held on the 5th instant. The meeting was of a very influential character. Mr. Thomas Bazley presided. The following are the resolutions, as adopted on the 5th instant, and submitted to the meeting:—"1. That a rate for education is desirable. 2. That all schools deriving aid from the rate shall be subject to inspection, but such inspection as is paid for out of the rate shall not extend to the religious instruction. 3. That all schools shall be entitled to aid out of the rate, provided the instruction, other than religious, shall come up to a required standard, and that no child shall be excluded on religious ground. 4. That distinctive religious formularies, where taught, shall be taught at some hour to be specified by the managers of the school, in each case, in order to facilitate the withdrawal of those children whose parents or guardians may object to their instruction in such distinctive religious formularies. 5. That there be no interference with the management or instruction of schools, other than may be needed to carry out the principles of the foregoing resolutions. 6. That the education rate be administered by local authorities, to be specially elected by and out of the ratepayers for the purpose." The resolutions, and the essential points raised in them, were discussed with great coolness and perfect candour. The Rev. Canon Richson moved—"That the resolutions now read be approved as a basis for a system of national education." The resolution was seconded by the Rev. Dr. McKerrow (Presbyterian), and adopted unanimously. A resolution appointing a committee "to promote the adoption of the resolutions by Act of Parliament" was then adopted.

EXTRAORDINARY LONGEVITY.—Died at the village of Wellbury, North Riding of the county of York, on the 16th inst., in the 110th year of her age, Jane Garbutt, widow. Deceased had been twice married, her husbands being sailors during the old war. For some years she has been maintained by the parish of Wellbury, having her own cottage and a female attendant. The old woman had dwindled into a small compass, but she was free from pain, retaining all her faculties to the last and enjoying her pipe.—*Stockton and Darlington Times.*

KIDDERMINSTER BANK.—The suspension of the Kidderminster Bank of Messrs. Farley, Turner, and Co., has been announced—in consequence of the death of Mr. Abraham Turner, its last representative. The general liabilities of the concern are said to be small.

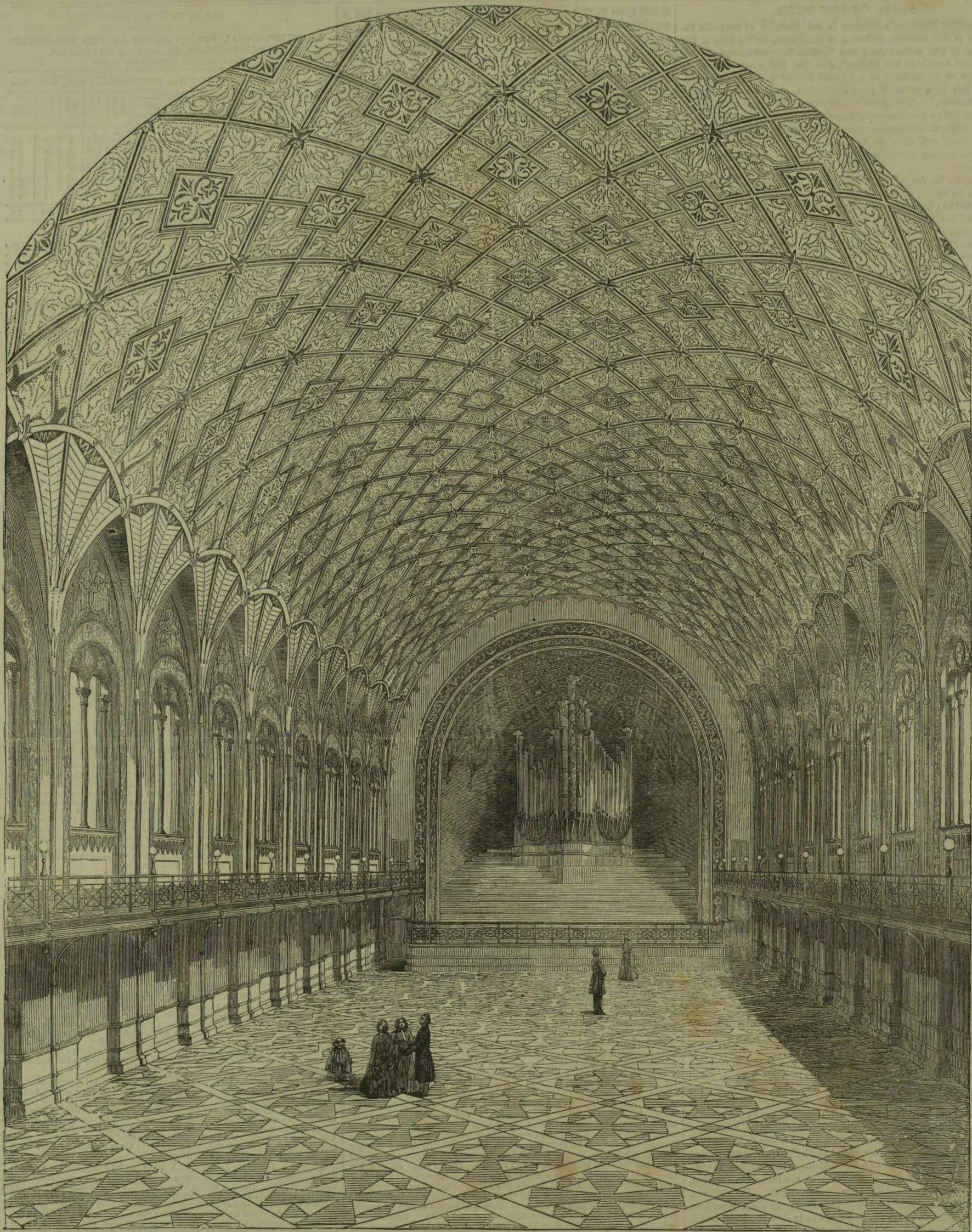
NEW CORN EXCHANGE, WALLINGFORD, BERKS.—This new edifice is designed in the Italian style. The roof is cast iron, and newly covered with rough plate glass; the principals are supported on piers, and arches are turned in brickwork between them, forming arched recesses, each side of the building. The total cost will be about 25000. The architect is Mr. J. S. Dodd, of Goring, near Reading; the builder, Mr. M. Winter, Wallingford. The market is one of the best in the county; and the new Exchange, which is nearly completed, will materially add to the comfort of the agriculturists and corn-merchants attending it.

ANOTHER BURGLARY NEAR SHEFFIELD.—Last Saturday night a burglary was committed on the premises of Mr. Thomas Rodgers, grocer, Atterbury, near Sheffield. While he and his wife were both busily employed in the shop some person broke into the dwelling-house and carried off a considerable amount of booty. Out of one drawer twelve silver spoons were stolen. From under the pillow of the bed a cash-box was taken containing a £5 note and £15 in silver; from under the mattress were taken three packets of gold, two of them containing £100 each, and the other £20; making altogether £240.

MURDER OF MR. LITTLE.—A man named Dowd, an engine-driver employed by the railway company, made a most important announcement on Tuesday. He says that after midnight on Friday (last week) he had occasion to go into a back yard in the rear of his house, when he saw a man muffled up come to one of the windows in the side of the building where the money was found on Thursday week; he shoved a plank through the window, and rested one end on the window-sill and the other on a high embankment in a garden adjoining. He went out by the plank with something in a handkerchief, and returned in a quarter of an hour, entered the building by the plank, which he pulled in after him, and closed the window. Dowd is under the examination of the police.

EXECUTION OF MARLEY.—On Monday morning last Robert Marley, alias Joseph Jenkins, was executed in front of the Old Bailey. Marley, it will be remembered, was sentenced to death for the murder of a man named Cope, in the shop of Mr. Berry, a jeweller, carrying on business in Parliament-street. The circumstances under which Cope was murdered were so clear against Marley that the sentence passed upon him was certain of execution; indeed, Marley himself never entertained the slightest hope that his life would be spared. At five o'clock on Monday morning Marley rose, and having dressed took his breakfast, and entered freely into conversation with the officers who had charge of him. At a few minutes before eight the Sheriffs and the Under Sheriffs entered the cell, where they found Marley standing up in a state of apparent unconcern. Mr. Under-Sheriff Anderton inquired whether he wished any of his friends to be communicated with, and he said he did not, that he had seen his sister, and did not desire to see any one else. Mr. Davis, addressing Mr. Sheriff Mechi, said Marley had requested him to state that he very much regretted Cope's death, that he was perfectly satisfied with the Judge and jury who tried him, that he admitted the justice of his sentence, and had to thank all the officials for the kindness he had received since he had been in the prison. On his appearance outside there was the usual amount of yelling on the part of the crowd—larger, it is said, than on any previous occasion during the last ten years; but he was quite unmoved by it. The rope was placed round his neck, the bolt was drawn, and he died in a moment without a struggle. The body remained suspended the usual time, and in the evening it was buried within the precincts of the gaol.

The duty on paper in the year ended the 31st March last was £1,047,430. In the preceding year it was £1,050,629.



ST. JAMES'S HALL, TO BE ERECTED BETWEEN PICCADILLY AND REGENT-STREET.—MR. OWEN JONES, ARCHITECT.

ST. JAMES'S HALL.

THE building which is to bear this designation is about to be constructed on a spot of ground between Regent-street and Piccadilly. It will be seen that, architecturally speaking, it is in all respects different from, as well as superior to, any other structure of similar character and purpose which is to be found in London; whilst it cannot be doubted that in point of utility it is certainly unrivalled, for there has long been a very general complaint that, although the love and knowledge of music are rapidly increasing in this country, there has not been a corresponding tendency amongst the patrons of the science to furnish fitting arenas for musical performances. Last season was distinguished by a larger number of concerts, *soirées musicales*, and *matinées musicales* than any previous year in our musical annals; and, consequently, the deficiency of which we speak was never more clearly demonstrated.

The growing taste for musical performances of a high order, and upon an extensive scale, renders it necessary that some additional provision should be made at the west end of London for such entertainments. With this view a public company has been formed, under the Limited Liability Act (capital £40,000), for the purpose of erecting a Grand Hall in the parish of St. James, which shall bear that name. The edifice will comprise a Grand Hall, 134 feet by 60, and 60 feet in height; and two minor Halls, one 60 feet by 48, and the other 43 feet by 40, and 23 in height.

A site (between Air-street and Swallow-street) peculiarly eligible for the purpose has been secured, which will be held on lease direct from

the Crown for a term of seventy-five years; and the building will have the advantage of four distinct entrances, with frontages in Regent-street and Piccadilly. The site in question affords ample space for all the appliances necessary to render the Halls complete in every respect. In addition to a commodious orchestra, it is proposed to erect galleries and boxes, with waiting-rooms, with a separate "Royal" entrance and vestibule; and without losing sight of a due regard to economy, to make the St. James's Hall the most perfect and complete building of the kind in Europe.

Arrangements have also been made for the purchase of the adjoining property in Regent-street, thus securing a third minor Hall, 60 feet by 40, and about 30 feet high, together with other extensive premises, which it is proposed to convert into a Restaurant of the first class, adjoining and communicating with the Concert Rooms; and facilities will be afforded for appropriating either of the Halls to public dinners or balls. The following list shows the dimensions of the St. James's Hall in comparison with those of other Music Halls in the metropolis and the provinces:—

| | Long. | Wide. | High. |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| St. James's Hall | 134 | 60 | 60 |
| Exeter Hall | 133 | 77 | 52 |
| St. Martin's Hall | 121 | 55 | 40 |
| Hanover-square | 90 | 30 | — |
| Opera Concert Room | 100 | 50 | — |
| Freemasons' Hall | 90 | 43 | 60 |
| Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool .. | 108 | 64 | — |
| Birmingham | 130 | 65 | 65 |

The building has been designed by Mr. Owen Jones, architect; and

the Grand Hall (which we have engraved) presents one of the richest specimens of ornamentation to be seen in any metropolitan public edifice. This Hall is on plan a parallelogram, five squares wide, and eight squares long, with recesses at one end for the orchestra, and at the other for the galleries. The vault is a semicircle, 30 feet diameter, springing at 30 feet from the floor of the Hall. Between each square are small columns, from which spring ribs, stretching right across the Hall, and dividing the surface of the Hall into eighty spaces, equal on plan, but varying in elevation. At each of the intersections of the ribs will be suspended a gas chandelier in the form of a star, to diffuse an equal light over the whole surface of the Hall.

The proposition of the new Music Hall originated with Mr. Beale, who has had considerable difficulty in overcoming the obstacles which presented themselves in the shape of unexpired leases, unaccommodating tenants, and unmanageable landlords; and much credit is due to Mr. Beale for the care he has bestowed in associating with him gentlemen whose reputations in the musical world are a guarantee for the judgment and taste which will preside over the arrangements. Such names as those of Benedict, Chappell, and Ella, should be sufficient to assure the public that the undertaking is likely to be carried on in a spirit and under circumstances worthy of so important an object. From the calculations already made the Directors estimate that, with a due exercise of economy and an efficient management in every branch of their operations, they shall be enabled to make the St. James's Hall the most perfect building of the kind in Europe, and as valuable as a commercial speculation as it will be to the best interests of music.



UNCLE WILLIAM'S CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.—DRAWN BY JOHN GILBERT.

UNCLE WILLIAM'S PRESENTS.

HAMMER, John! hammer, John! Open the box!
Why don't the nails, John, yield to your knocks?
Faster, John! Hammer, John! Dying are we
Kind Uncle William's grand presents to see.
Faster, John! Hammer, John! There's the last nail!
Off with the lid and the treasures unveil!

Gently, young master. If rudely you seize
On life's tempting playthings, as fragile as these,
You'll crush, not enjoy, the delight they might bring;
So be patient, and form round the table a ring.
Here, for baby, are bells—how their jingle delights!
(Where's the old man so wise that no jingle excites?)

A *tombleur* for Bobby, gay, rolling, and fat—
Bob is rather a glutton, and may grow like that.
Noah's Ark, with such wonders of beasts and of men,
That e'en Noah himself would not know them again:
A bat and a ball for Augustus; look out,
And remember your hits are all watched by a scout.

A doll for dear Clara; a cottage for May—
If the two will unite there's no end to their play:
Fido begs for his collar—ah! often we crave
As an emblem of honour the badge of a slave!
There's an end: so we'll wish Uncle Will, with a cheer,
A most merry Christmas and happy New Year!

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK.

SUNDAY, Dec. 21.—4th Sunday in Advent.
MONDAY, 22.—Holcroft born, 1744.
TUESDAY, 23.—Escape of Lavalette, 1815.
WEDNESDAY, 24.—Christmas Eve. Robin Hood died, 1247.
THURSDAY, 25.—CHRISTMAS DAY. Newton born, 1642.
FRIDAY, 26.—St. Stephen. Gray born, 1716.
SATURDAY, 27.—St. John. Keats died, 1820.

TIMES OF HIGH WATER AT LONDON BRIDGE,
FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 27, 1856.

| Sunday. | Monday. | Tuesday. | Wednesday. | Thursday. | Friday. | Saturday. |
|---------|---------|----------|------------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| h m | h m | h m | h m | h m | h m | h m |
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HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—M. JULLIEN'S
ANNUAL BAL MASQUE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 22nd.

M. Julien has the honour to announce that his Grand Annual Bal Masqué will, this year, take place at Her Majesty's Theatre, on Monday next, December 22nd.
Under ordinary circumstances, M. Julien would have felt that the patronage hitherto bestowed on his Annual Entertainment, and the general satisfaction evinced on every occasion, rendered it unnecessary for him to add one word to the mere announcement of the Ball. A recent event, however, makes it imperative on him to draw the attention of his kind patrons to the fact, that, after seventeen years of constant labour and care, he has succeeded in transforming the trivial entertainment formerly known as the "Masquerade" into the magnificent Fête of the BAL MASQUE; and in placing it on a level with those given in the largest establishments of Europe—at the Académie Impériale de Paris, the Imperial Theatres of St. Petersburg and Vienna, and the Theatre Royal of Berlin; of which the Sovereigns of those capitals do not disdain to honour with their presence. Having thus raised the character of these entertainments, M. Julien is satisfied that the public will not hold him responsible for the ill-directed efforts of plagiarists and imitators.

M. Julien's Bal Masqué will be given this year with the same splendour as before, and will take place at Her Majesty's Theatre; an establishment already famous for the magnificent Balls which have, under the most distinguished patronage, been given within its walls. M. Julien feels confident that this, his Seventeenth Bal Masqué in England, will, for brilliancy and splendour, have never been excelled.

The Orchestra will comprise One Hundred and Ten Musicians. Principal Cornets à Pistons, Herr König and M. Duhem; Conductor, M. Julien.
The newest and most fashionable Music will be played, including several new Polkas, Waltzes, and Quadrilles, composed expressly by M. Julien for his Concerts, and for this occasion.

The Dances will be regulated by Fourteen Maitres des Cérémonies, whose arrangements will be strictly carried out.
No one will be admitted except in Evening Dress or Fancy Costume. The whole Theatre will be ornamented by a new and superb decoration.

Mr. Nathan, of Castle-street, Leicester-square, has been appointed Costumier to the Ball.

Tickets for the Ball, 10s. 6d. The prices of admission for spectators (for whom the audience portion of the Theatre will be set apart) will be—Dress Circle, 5s.; Gallery Stalls, 2s. 6d.; Private Boxes from 43s. and upwards.

Persons taking Private Boxes will have the privilege of passing to and from the Ball-room without extra charge. Tickets for the Ball, Places, and Private Boxes, may be secured at the Box Office of Her Majesty's Theatre; of the principal Librarians and Music-sellers; and at Messrs. Julien and Co.'s, 214, Regent-street. The Doors will be opened at Half-past Nine, and the Dancing commence at Half-past Ten.

Refreshments will be supplied during the Evening, and at One o'clock the Supper will be served.

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.—Positively the

Last Two Nights of Perea Nena and her Spanish Dancers. Monday and Tuesday the Comedy of MONEY, in which Mr. Murdoch will repeat the character of Evelyn. After which, last two nights, THE STAK OF ANJALUSIA, and final engagement of Perea Nena; with A FAMILY FADING and THE GALICIAN FETE. On Friday and Saturday, THE HONEYMOON; after which the New Haymarket Christmas Pantomime, entitled THE BABES IN THE WOOD, or Harlequin and the Cruel Uncle.

ROYAL PRINCESS' THEATRE.—MONDAY,

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM and the CORSIAN BROTHERS, last night of performing before Christmas. On FRIDAY, December 26, will be produced a new grand Christmas Pantomime, called ALADDIN and the WONDERFUL LAMP; or, the Genii of the King; Harlequin, Mr. Cornack; Clown, Mr. Huline; Pantaloon, Mr. Paulo; Columbine, Miss C. Adams. Preceded by the Corsican Brothers. Saturday, the Corsican Brothers and the Pantomime. On Monday, Dec. 29, will be presented A Midsummer Night's Dream and the Pantomime.

THEATRE ROYAL, ADELPHI.—The Last Two Nights of

JANET PRIDE and the ELVES.—Boxing Night and Saturday only, PAUL PRY. A new Original Union Burlesque and Pantomime, called MOTHER SHIPTON; or, Harlequin Knights of Love, or the Enchanted Whistle Pipe Piccolo. Harlequin, Madame Celeste; Columbine, Miss Wyndham.

ASTLEY'S ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.—Monday and all

the Week, Thursday excepted, MACBETH, with Mr. W. Cooke's Equestrian Illustrations. Also the SCENES IN THE CIRCLE. To conclude on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday with various Novelties; and on Friday (Boxing Night), and Saturday, with a New Grand Equestrian Comic Pantomime, called PAUL PRY ON HORSEBACK; or, Harlequin and the Magic Horseshoe. Commence at Seven precisely.

GREAT NATIONAL STANDARD THEATRE.

SHOREDITCH.—This year the most splendid CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME ever witnessed, introducing upwards of Thirty Scenes and great Magical Changes. The First Performance of the Pantomime will be on Christmas Eve, December 24th, at 7. Three Day Performances: Boxing Day, Saturday, and Monday, 29th, at Twelve o'clock.

MISS P. HORTON'S POPULAR ILLUSTRATIONS.—

Mr. and Mrs. T. GERMAN REED will give their ENTERTAINMENT, introducing several new Illustrations, at the ROYAL GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION, 14, Regent-street, EVERY EVENING (except Saturday), at Eight o'clock. A Morning Performance every Saturday at Three o'clock. Stalls, 3s. 2s., 1s., may be secured at the Gallery, from 11 till 4 daily; and at Cramer, Beale, and Co.'s, 201, Regent-street.

MR. W. S. WOODIN'S OLIO OF ODDITIES, with new

Costumes, and various Novelties, Vocal and Characteristic, will be given during the CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS, at the POLYGRAPHIC HALL, King William-street, Charing-cross. Opening Night, FRIDAY, Dec. 26. First MORNING Performance, on SATURDAY, DEC. 27, at Three.—Private Boxes and Stalls may be secured, without extra charge, at the Box-office. The Polygraphic Hall is being entirely redecorated.

VALENTINE VOUSDEN'S First Day Performance

on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27th, at Two o'clock.

SALLE VOUSDEN, 315, Oxford-street (Ten Doors from the

Regent-circus).—VALENTINE VOUSDEN, the great Polynesian Mimic, in his Original Entertainment, the UNITY OF NATIONS. Every Evening (except Saturday) at 8. Seats, 3s., 2s., 1s., may be had at Mitchell's, 33, Old Bond-street.

THE SISTERS SOPHIA and ANNIE, in their original

Entertainment, entitled SKETCHES from NATURE, will appear, Monday, Dec. 29th, and during the Week, at the Queen-street Hall, Edinburgh. Morning performances on Thursday and Saturday.

ROYAL POLYTECHNIC.—The CHRISTMAS Entertain-

ments this year are on the most liberal and extensive scale.
New Lectures by J. H. PEPER, Esq., on "Optical Illusions," with curious experiments. Juvenile Lecture on "Fireworks," with increased Illustrations and Exhibition of the Grand "British Bonquet," displaying the Portraits of her Majesty, Prince Albert, and the Royal Family, in magnificent Pyrotechnics, by Mr. Davis.
Miniature Juvenile Model Theatre, by Mr. Freeman, who will exhibit the Ghost Scene from the "Corsican Brothers," and the Drama of "One o'clock; or the Knight and the Wood Demon."
M. Logrenia's astonishing Conjuring Tricks and Comic Dilemmas.
Entire new series of Dissolving Views by Mr. Clare, illustrating the "Traveller's Portfolio."
Gratuitous Distribution of thousands of beautiful ornaments and Mappin's Pocket-knives from the Giant Christmas Tree.
Second and most costly series of Dissolving Views, illustrating Blue Beard, with humorous and original descriptions by Leicester Buckingham, Esq.
Admission to the whole, 1s.; children and schools, half-price.

EXHIBITION OF ART-TREASURES OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM, 1857.—ISSUE OF SEASON TICKETS.—The Executive Committee will be prepared to ISSUE SEASON TICKETS for the forthcoming EXHIBITION on and after the 1st of January, 1857. The Committee are induced to make this early appeal for the support of the Public in order that they may be enabled more economically to meet the heavy pecuniary demands which the magnitude of the undertaking involves. The Season Tickets (not transferable) will be of two classes—

1st. A Ticket—price £2 2s.—entitling the proprietor to admission on all occasions when the Exhibition is open to the Public.
2nd. A Ticket—price £1 1s.—entitling the proprietor to admission on all occasions when open to the public excepting only a limited number of days (not exceeding eight) reserved for state ceremonials or special attractions. Such reserved days will be duly advertised, and will include the days of opening and closing the Exhibition.
To prevent disappointment the Committee have to announce that, as upon the reserved days, a limited number of visitors only can be conveniently and satisfactorily accommodated, they have determined that the registered owners of such limited number of the £2 2s. tickets as may be first issued shall be entitled to admission to the reserved parts of the building. When the limit of this issue shall be attained the fact will be announced by public advertisement.

The Exhibition will be opened early in May, 1857.
Tickets will be on sale at the Offices of the Exhibition, 100, Mosley-street, on and after the 1st of January, 1857.

Application for tickets, by letter, must be addressed to the Secretary; and Post-office Orders or remittances made payable to Charles Henry Minchin, Manchester.

By order of the Executive Committee,
15th December, 1856. Offices of the Exhibition, 100, Mosley-street, Manchester. THOMAS HAMILTON, Secretary.

MONT BLANC.—ARRANGEMENTS for CHRISTMAS.—

Monday, Dec. 22, Evening at 8; Tuesday, Dec. 23, Afternoon at 3; Tuesday, Dec. 23, Evening at 8; Wednesday, Dec. 24, Evening at 8; Friday, Dec. 26, Afternoon at 3; Friday, Dec. 26, Evening at 8; Saturday, Dec. 27, Afternoon at 3; Monday, Dec. 29, Afternoon at 3; Monday, Dec. 29, Evening at 8; Tuesday, Dec. 30, Afternoon at 3; Tuesday, Dec. 30, Evening at 8.—EGYPTIAN HALL, Piccadilly.

GENERAL TOM THUMB!—Three Levees Daily at the

REGENT GALLERY, QUADRANT.—This American Man in Miniature, undoubtedly the smallest in the world, intelligent, sprightly, educated, perfectly symmetrical in all his proportions, and graceful beyond belief, will arrive in the steamer "Persia," on his way to Russia, accompanied by his mother and other members of his family. Prior to his departure for the Continent, the little General will hold Three Public Levees each day, for a short time only, at the Regent Gallery, Quadrant, Regent-street, near Air-street, commencing on BOXING-DAY, 26th DEC. He will appear in a great variety of new Characters and Costumes, Songs, Dances, Grecian Statues, &c., &c. His Miniature Character and Figures, with Edin. Coachman and Footman, will promenade the streets daily, and be seen in front of Regent Gallery at the termination of each day's levee.

Thirteen years ago the General had the distinguished honour of appearing (by command) three times before her Majesty and the Royal Family, at Buckingham Palace; since which period he has performed before the principal Potentates of Europe, and more than Ten Millions of Ladies and Gentlemen in the Old and New World.

Hours of Exhibition.—From 11 till 1; 3 till 5; and 7 till 10 o'clock. Admission, 1s., without regard to age. Reserved stalls, 2s.; children, 1s.

CANTERBURY HALL, Westminster-road.—OPEN EVERY

EVENING.—The celebrated SPANISH MINSTRELS will appear in their National Costume at Nine and Eleven o'clock, in addition to the usual VOCAL ENTERTAINMENTS.—Suppers, &c., until Twelve o'clock.

COLDWELL'S ASSEMBLY ROOMS, Dean-street, Soho.—

SOIREEES D'ANANTES Every Night.—Arrangements for the Christmas festivities, long quadrille nights, and New Year's Eve. Admission 1s. The second Bal Masqué will take place on Thursday, Jan. 8, 1857. "Don't forget, papa, the annual juvenile ball, grand distribution, Christmas-tree, to take place on Tuesday, January 13, 1857, commencing at 7." Tickets 1s. each.

LEICESTER HALL, 5, Leicester-square (late Linwood

Gallery).—Spacious and Elegant MUSIC HALL OPEN EVERY EVENING at Seven o'clock. Popular Songs, Duets, Glee; Instrumental Solos; Select Band. Suppers, Cigars, &c.

WHITTINGTON CLUB.—The next DRAWINGROOM

will be held at the FREEMASONS' HALL, Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn, on TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 23rd. Dancing to commence at Eight o'clock precisely. A second series of Seven Drawingrooms will commence on Tuesday, January 6, and will be continued on alternate Tuesday evenings.

The Seventh Annual JUBILEE BALL will be held on Thursday, January 1st. Particulars and terms may be obtained at the Temporary Offices of the Club, 262, Strand.

HOME for the GENTLEWOMEN in REDUCED CIRCUM-

STANCES, 25 and 26, Queen-square, Bloomsbury. Founded 1849.

This benevolent institution, which accommodates 57 ladies, would be nearly self-supporting if the debt originated in furnishing it for so large a number could be cleared off. 32 friends now offer £10 each towards a fund for this special purpose, and, if 8 other donors will kindly contribute the like sum, there will be no impediment to its successful operation.

Donations are most earnestly solicited, and will be thankfully received by the Sub-Treasurer, the Rev. Mr. W. Lushington, M.A., Althorpe, the Great and Little London; or by the bankers, Messrs. Hanson and Co., 1, Pall-mall East.

HANWELL COLLEGE and PREPARATORY SCHOOL.—

THE TERMS of this long-established, economical, and successful institution may be had on application to the Principal. N.B. Unusual and very peculiar advantages are afforded to Young Gentlemen destined for India.

A MARRIED CLERGYMAN in the country is willing to

ADOPT one or more CHILDREN, on receiving an equivalent. Address J. C. Clericus, 21, George-square, Edinburgh.

A LITERARY GENTLEMAN, who is medically advised

not to live alone, wishes to find a respectable, cultivated FAMILY, in the north-western or western suburbs of London, where, he could RESIDE. If several in family, and musical, so much the better. Replies to be addressed to S. H., 12, Hamilton-place, King's-cross.

WEDDING CARRIAGES.—R. STAPLETON'S new silver-

mounted EASTRANS, with men's livery to match, kept expressly for wedding parties. Post chaises, &c. Orders executed in town or country. Head depot, New Broad-street-mews, New Broad-street-buildings. Established 1842.

MENTAL DERANGEMENT.—A quiet Patient may be

placed with a Family (no children) occupying a large, convenient House, with pleasure-grounds, situate about the centre of Carmarthenshire, on an eminence, in a picturesque and healthy locality. The Advertiser, who will take charge of the invalid, has had considerable experience. Good, quiet, and cheerful society, and every facility for Driving, Hiding, and Walking. Expenses Moderate. Address B. Y., Post-office, Llanelly, Carmarthen; or B. Y., care of Mr. Cross, 53, Moorgate-street, London.

CITY OF LONDON LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY,

15, New Bridge-street, Blackfriars. E. F. LEEKS, Secretary.

AUSTRALIAN JOINT-STOCK BANK, Sydney, Mel-

bourne.—LETTERS of CREDIT and DRAFTS are GRANTED upon these places by Messrs. HEYWOODS, KENNARDS, and CO., No. 4, Lombard-street, the Agents of the Bank. They also undertake to negotiate bills, and to make advances on securities at the current rates. By order of the Court of Directors, Australian Joint-Stock Bank, Sydney, EDWARD WRENCH, Manager.

EAST and WEST INDIES, AUSTRALIA, &c.—Plans and

Rates of Passage for all the First-class Steamers and Sailing Vessels. Estimates for Outfits. London—Winchester House, Old Broad-street. Southampton—1, Queen's-terrace.

Baggage shipped and cleared inwards. Insurances effected.

THE ORIENTAL GAS COMPANY (Limited).—Notice is

hereby given, that amongst the Scrip Certificates of Shares sent in to the Office of this Company for registration, it has been discovered that some of the documents purporting to represent Shares in this Company are Forgeries. The Directors give this notice in order that the public may be cautioned against dealing in the Shares of the Company until they have been duly registered, pursuant to the notices already given by the Board. Up to the present time only Five documents, purporting to be Certificates of Fifty Shares each, have been discovered to be forged. By order of the Board of Directors.

127, Leadenhall-street, London, December 11, 1856. H. J. BADDELEY, Secretary.

THE LIVERPOOL and LONDON FIRE and LIFE

INSURANCE COMPANY. Has been Established Twenty Years.

Has paid in Claims, under its Policies, upwards of £800,000
(in Dividends to its Proprietors 417,380
Has a paid-up Capital of 170,858
and accumulated Funds of 543,234
Has from Fire Premiums only an income exceeding 180,000
and from Life Premiums 63,990

It paid to Annuitants in 1855, the sum of £11,306 10s. 6d.

Forms of proposal and further information can be had on application at the Offices of the Company, 37, Castle-street, Liverpool; 30 and 31, Poultry, London; 61, King-street, Manchester; 128, Ingram-street, Glasgow; or to the Agents elsewhere.

SWINTON BOULT, Secretary to the Company, BENJAMIN HENDERSON, Resident Secretary.

THE CONSERVATIVE LAND SOCIETY.

TRUSTEES. The Lord Viscount Ranleigh. Right Hon. R. A. C. N. Hamilton, M.P.
The Hon. Colonel Lowther, M.P. J. C. Cobbold, Esq., M.P.

The Fifth Year.—Eligible Investment for Capital and Savings. By paying 8s. per month, and another 1s. quarterly, any person (children well as adults) may become the holder of a £50 share, without partnership liability of any kind. The entrance fee per share is 2s. 6d., and a pass-book (for any number of shares) costs 1s.; the first enrolment would be therefore 12s. 6d., and 8s. monthly afterwards. Sums of £5 and upwards bear interest at the rate of 5 per cent per annum, paid half-yearly, one month after Lady-day and Michaelmas.

All the members, whether they pay their subscriptions monthly, in advance, or take completed shares, price 22s. 6d. each, participate in the annual division of the profits. Six per cent bonus was paid for 1856. The taking of land is quite optional. Resolutions to be had of

CHARLES LEWIS GRUBBES, Secretary. Offices, 33, Norfolk-street, Strand, London.

CANCER HOSPITAL, LONDON and WEST BROMPTON.

Secretary's Office, 167, Piccadilly. PRESIDENT.—The Right Hon. the Earl of Arlrig.

CHAIRMAN.—The Hon. Colonel Ogilvy, Jexthable Hall, Dartford, Kent. CHAPLAINS.—The Rev. Thomas Pearson, M.A.; the Rev. Nathaniel Liberty, Brompton.

TREASURER.—William Loxham Farrer, Esq., 66, Lincoln's-inn-fields. SECRETARY.—The Rev. Canon Cook, 15, Strand.

IN APPEALING to the PUBLIC to SUPPORT this CHARITY the COMMITTEE feel it only necessary to state the simple fact, that, of all diseases to which the human frame is liable, that of Cancer is not only one of the most painful and one of the most fatal, but it is of all others the most difficult disease successfully to treat. This Hospital has been in operation now five years, during which time it has administered relief to upwards of 1800 poor persons afflicted with this dreadful malady, and it continues to have constantly under treatment about 400 patients.

Contributions will be most thankfully received by the Treasurer, the Bankers, and at the London Establishment, 167, Piccadilly (immediately opposite to Bond-street).

By order, W. J. COCKERELL, Secretary.

ROYAL ORTHOPÆDIC HOSPITAL, for the Treatment

of Clubfoot, Spinal and other Deformities, 315, Oxford-street (late Bloomsbury-square). Number of patients admitted 20,000

Under treatment 1,600

Severe cases waiting for admission 200

Increased accommodations have been provided, but additional funds are required to render them available.

£10 10s. constitutes a Life Governor, £5 5s. a Governor for ten years, £1 1s. annually an Annual Governor.

Contributions thankfully received at Messrs. Martin's, 68, Lombard-street; Hanbury's, 60, Lombard-street; Union Bank of London, Argyll-place; and by the Secretary, at the Hospital. GEORGE KEMP, M.A., Chap. and Hon. Sec. BENJAMIN MASKELL, Secretary.

NOTICE to NEWS-AGENTS.—CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.—The demand far exceeds the supply, and it is hoped that all persons in the News Trade will be careful to supply regular Subscribers first, as they are justly entitled to the preference.

THE COLOURED SUPPLEMENT.—Messrs. Burton and Cayley, 259,

High Holborn, will supply frames for the two-page engraving for 4s. 6d.: a double frame for the two single-page engravings, 4s.; the single page, 2s. Address Burton and Cayley, Framemakers, No. 259, High Holborn.

THE YEAR 1857.

We have great pleasure in announcing various contemplated Improvements in the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS, in the respective departments of Printing, Engraving, and Literary Contributions; also in announcing a series of the finest Works of Art. On February 7th,

A MAGNIFICENT TWO-PAGE

PORTRAIT OF THE QUEEN,

PRINTED IN BEAUTIFUL COLOURS, WORTHY OF THE BEST FRAME.

ALSO, PORTRAITS OF

THE LORD CHANCELLOR

AND

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

CAREFULLY PRINTED IN COLOURS.

It is recommended that an order to supply the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS regularly be given to any respectable Bookseller or Newsagent, with a request that the Paper be carefully folded and packed.

PRICE FIVEPENCE EACH WEEK.

Stamped Copies 1d. extra, which will carry the Paper free through the post as many times as required without any extra charge for fourteen days.

Office, 198, Strand, December, 1856.

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1856.

THE official speech of Mr. Pierce, the actual President of the

United States, addressed to his countrymen and through them to the world, has reached England simultaneously with the non-official

speech addressed by Mr. Buchanan, the President Elect, to the students of the Franklin and Marshall College. Under the cir-

cumstances the non-official speech will excite the greater curiosity.

Mr. Pierce has scarcely three months of office before him, and during those months his power, attenuated and shadowy, will grow more

shadowy still. Nothing that he can do or say will, to any appreci-

able extent, influence the policy of the Union. There is a new

face at the hearth, a new step on the floor, a new star in the firma-

ment—and few, at least in the great world of Europe, will care to

learn what the outgoing President thinks of the various matters

that interest both the Old World and the New. Yet it

must be admitted that the farewell speech of President Pierce,

especially as regards the relations of Europe and America,

is dignified and satisfactory. With regard to domestic policy

it blinks the great question of Slavery. But, why should it

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its present boundaries would prepare the way for its ultimate extinction in the natural course of events, and without damage to the material interests of those who, by no fault of their own, but by a necessity, dating back from many generations, are compelled to derive their wealth from an institution which, theoretically, they condemn and deplore as much as the most zealous Abolitionist. America suffers from a Black Fever. What she wants to effect a cure is Time. Those who would eradicate the black taint by one operation might kill the patient, or create a new malady worse than the original disease. Let Mr. Buchanan, the chosen of the South, teach the South moderation; and for his term of office, at least, the Union will be free from the dangers which menace it. This much he can attempt; and if he attempt it earnestly and conscientiously, and with no objects to serve but the greatness and prosperity of the whole Union, he will to some extent succeed. If, at the same time, he will avoid imitating the often impertinent and injudicious foreign policy of his predecessor, he may, even in four years, build himself a great name, and entitle himself not only to the gratitude and esteem of his own countrymen, but of all who value popular freedom, and desire its extension both in the Old World and in the New.

Whatever may have been said to the contrary in violent and ill-informed journals, whether in London or in New York, Great Britain feels no jealousy of, and no hostility to, the United States of America; but, on the contrary, sympathises with their afflictions and rejoices in their prosperity. We believe that this kindly feeling will grow; and rejoice to see such a touching proof of its existence as that afforded by the history of the Arctic ship the *Resolute*; and its last graceful episode, the visit of Queen Victoria to the American Captain who conveyed the noble gift across the Atlantic. The United States owed us some token of reparation, for the uncourteous dismissal of our Ambassador, and for all the circumstances connected with the silly and unworthy dispute on the Enlistment question. They have nobly given it in the restoration of the *Resolute*; and the Queen has as nobly responded to it in her friendly visit to Captain Hartstein. We believe that the sentiments expressed by the American sailor, in his short and appropriate speech to her Majesty on the deck of the *Resolute*, are those felt by his countrymen towards this country and its Sovereign; and that similar feelings are entertained towards America and Americans on our side of the Atlantic. Great Britain approves of the alliance with France; but there is another alliance which would gratify Englishmen even more thoroughly, if that be possible, and that is an alliance with America; and such an event may be nearer than the world supposes.

THE COURT.

The feature of the past week has been the visit of the Queen to the Arctic discovery-ship *Resolute*, lately presented by the Government of the United States to her Majesty's Navy. The *Resolute* arrived at Spithead at the close of last week, and was brought down to Cowes harbour on Wednesday, for the convenience of her Majesty, who, with Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, the Princess Royal, and the Princess Alice, was received on board by Captain Hartstein, of the United States' Navy, and the officers of the ship. Before leaving the vessel her Majesty invited Captain Hartstein to dinner at Osborne, and gave directions that £100 should be divided among the crew.

On Monday the Queen and Prince, with the Princess Royal and the Princess Alice, drove to Newport to inspect Baron Marchetti's monument erected in Newport Church by her Majesty's command to the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I.

The only visitor at Osborne during the week has been his Highness the Maharajah Duleep Singh, who arrived on Saturday and returned to London on Monday.

The Court is expected to return to Windsor Castle on Tuesday next.

The Duke and Duchess of Richmond and family have left town to pass the Christmas holidays at Goodwood.

Lady Howard de Walden, and the Honourable Misses Ellis, have rejoined his Excellency Lord Howard de Walden, at the British Legation, at Brussels.

Sir Robert and Lady Emily Peel are entertaining a large party of distinguished friends at Drayton Manor. The gentlemen have had great sport in the hon. Baronet's preserves.

POSTPONEMENT OF THE PRINCESS ROYAL'S MARRIAGE.—It is now understood that the marriage of Prince Frederick William, which was fixed for the 18th of October next (the Prince's birthday), has been postponed, and will now take place on the 21st of November, the day on which the Princess Royal will complete her seventeenth year. Arrangements have been made for the completion by that time of the alterations which are being made in the Palace Unter den Linden, formerly inhabited by the late King, and now being fitted up for the residence of the young couple.—*Letter from Berlin, Dec. 12.*

SIMPSON'S "SEAT OF WAR IN THE EAST."—Probably no great event of our time has been illustrated with such minute and picturesque art as the late War in the East. Among the artists who applied themselves to the laborious undertaking Mr. Simpson stands in the foremost rank. His sketches, as they were dispatched from the seat of the strife, excited great interest; and, subsequently, their truthfulness and vivid realities, as well as their artistic beauty, were acknowledged by thousands who had been participants in the great contest the localities and episodes of which Mr. Simpson has so successfully pictured. The publication of these sketches, with the aid of lithography tinted, and that in a shorter space of time than could have been effected by any other process, has been a triumph of pictorial art. They extend to eighty views; they have been dedicated to her Majesty, and have had a large sale. The remaining copies of the work are to be disposed of by Messrs. Southgate and Barrett, on Monday evening next; when, to ensure purchasers against the reproduction of the views in a deteriorated form, the drawings on the stones will be obliterated in the presence of the purchasers. We need scarcely add how largely this step will enhance the value and interest of these memorials of the war; and we feel that little beyond this announcement is requisite to induce all who wish to become possessors of these war-pictures to avail themselves of the above opportunity.

DR. LIVINGSTONE'S AFRICAN DISCOVERIES.—The members of the Royal Geographical Society held a special meeting last Monday evening to present the society's gold medal to the Rev. Dr. Livingstone for his discoveries in Central Africa. The society's rooms were crowded to excess. Dr. Livingstone, on entering the room, was warmly greeted by the distinguished assemblage. At half-past eight the chair was taken by Sir Roderick Murchison, president of the society, who, after some highly-eloquent remarks on the important discoveries made by Dr. Livingstone, presented him with the gold medal of the society as a testimonial of their regard and admiration. Dr. Livingstone, in returning thanks for the high honour they had conferred on him, said he had only done his duty as a Christian missionary in attempting to open up part of southern interior Africa to the sympathy of Christendom, and he felt very much gratified by finding in the interest which they and many others had expressed a pledge that the true negro family whose country he had traversed, would yet become a part of the general community of nations. Mr. Galton, Mr. McQueen, Colonel Steele, Captain Vardon, Mr. Brande, and Mr. Gordon Cumming—all of them travellers in Africa—bore testimony to the value of Dr. Livingstone's discoveries, and to the tact, courage, and unwearied ardour with which he had pursued them. Professor Owen also adverted to the interesting acquisitions of zoological science likely to accrue from the labours of the distinguished traveller. The meeting, which was one of great interest, did not terminate until near midnight.

ROYAL HONOURS.—Her Majesty, as a mark of her regard, and in honour of the alliance which is to take place between the Princess Royal and Prince Frederick of Prussia, is about to confer upon the Hereditary Prince of Prussia, the father of Prince Frederick, the Order of the Garter. Sir Colin Campbell has been appointed to convey the Order, with an autograph letter from the Queen to the Hereditary Prince. Sir Colin starts upon his mission this week.

METROPOLITAN NEWS.

THE LONDON RECORDERSHIP.—On Monday last Mr. Russell Gurney was unanimously elected to the office of Recorder of the city of London.

THE COMMON SERJEANTSHIP OF THE CITY.—On Wednesday a meeting of the friends of Mr. T. Chambers, M.P. for Hertford, took place at the Guildhall Tavern, Gresham-street, for the purpose of taking steps to secure the return of that gentleman as Common Serjeant, vice Russell Gurney, Esq., now Recorder of the city of London. The chair was taken by Joseph Furnley, Esq., one of the magistrates for the county of Middlesex, and Common Councilman for the ward of Aldgate. Mr. Alderman Hale, after a brief speech, in the course of which he succinctly enumerated the qualifications of Thomas Chambers, Esq., M.P., concluded his address by proposing that gentleman as a "fit and proper person to fill the important office of Common Serjeant, rendered vacant by the elevation of Mr. Russell Gurney to the Recordership of the city of London." Mr. Herbert Lloyd seconded the nomination. Some other motions of a routine character were then proposed and carried, on the proposition and disposal of which Mr. Jonathan Thorp, Mr. S. Morley, and Mr. Moore took part; after which a committee of gentlemen connected with the several wards was organised, and pledges mutually given to support the claims of the candidate. Mr. Chambers then briefly explained his pretensions. He said he stood in a free and unfettered position; that he was not subject to the restrictions placed by custom or otherwise upon members of the bar who had practised at the criminal courts; and, in conclusion, he assured the whole of the citizens present that if elected he would endeavour to maintain their rights, and to sustain, so far as in him lay, the honour, dignity, and judicial uprightness of the city of London. Mr. Chambers was frequently applauded during the delivery of his short address. The gentlemen present then resolved themselves into a committee, and the proceedings closed. We understand there are already eight candidates in the field for the vacant office—viz., Messrs. Chambers, M.P., Bodkin, Riddell (Sir Walter), Locke (special pleader), Corrie (magistrate of Clerkenwell Court), Gaselee (Serjeant), Thomas (Serjeant), Prendergast (Judge of the Sheriffs' Court), and C. E. Pulling, Esq.

REDUCTION OF THE INCOME-TAX.—A numerously-attended meeting of the various parishes comprised within the Holborn Union was held at the workhouse, in Gray's-inn-lane, on Tuesday evening, for the purpose of considering what steps should be taken to obtain relief from the oppressive burden of the Income-tax. Mr. J. S. Hopwood, chairman of the board of guardians, took the chair. Mr. Tidmarsh moved the first resolution:—"That this meeting considers that the present amount levied for property and income tax is excessive, and ought to be immediately reduced to the original amount of 7d. in the pound, with a view to its ultimate entire abolition; and especially that the tax upon incomes should be modified so as not to press so heavily as it does now upon trades, professions, and limited incomes." After some discussion the resolution was amended by adding after the word "reduction" the words "by taking off the additional 9d. levied for the exigencies of the war;" and also by adding the words "requiring the immediate removal of the tax from all incomes of £150. and under;" and, as thus amended, it was unanimously adopted. Mr. Watts moved the second resolution:—"That the Income-tax is unjust, inasmuch as it taxes alike those who derive their property from uncertain means and those who possess incomes from real property and permanent capital. The mode of assessment, too, is objectionable, through its tendency to oppress the industrious tradesmen and professional men, who are compelled to make returns of income to which objections are raised, and are thereby put to expense and exposure on giving explanations of their circumstances to the Commissioners on Appeals." The resolution was put to the meeting, and unanimously adopted, as was also one appointing a committee to prepare a petition embodying the sentiments of the meeting, for presentation to Parliament; and, after a vote of thanks to the chairman, the meeting separated.

THE NEW CATTLE MARKET.—On Monday last the Lord Mayor, accompanied by some members of the Common Council, proceeded upon a visit of inspection to the new Metropolitan Cattle Market, upon the occasion of the grand Christmas Cattle Show. His Lordship and the committee, upon arriving at the market, viewed the stock, of which there were penned and tied upwards of 6000 beasts and 16,000 sheep. Some of the prize animals belonging to the competitors at the late show in Baker-street were also viewed. His Lordship and the committee subsequently visited the works in the clock tower and the bells, and expressed their high approbation of the improvements which had recently been made, and of all the arrangements which had been completed for the comfort and accommodation of the buyers and sellers.

THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.—The Emperor of the French has presented to the Court of Directors of the East India Company portraits of himself and of the Empress, as an acknowledgment of the efforts made by that body to contribute to the Paris Exhibition a collection of specimens worthy of India. The portraits are of full-length size, and well executed; and will probably be placed in one of the new rooms which are being added to the Museum at the India-house.

MR. SPURGEON AT THE SURREY MUSIC HALL.—On Sunday morning Mr. Spurgeon delivered the last of the four sermons he had been announced to preach in this hall. The congregation was greater than on any of the previous occasions, probably exceeding 8000. The greatest order and decorum were observed during the whole of the service. The rev. gentleman selected as his text Hebrews, c. 11, v. 6, "But without faith it is impossible to please God."

WHO'S TO BLAME?—According to a letter from the chairman of the Great Northern Railway Company, the directors are not prepared to admit the statement that Mr. Redpath's department was wholly out of the sphere of the auditors, although they had virtually or apparently done so by accepting and publishing it without comment. The question will doubtless be settled by the full explanations the shareholders are likely to demand at the next meeting.

COMMISSION ON SEWAGE DEODORISATION.—Owing to the great diversity of opinion existing on this subject, which was shared in by the Government, it has been determined to appoint at once a scientific commission, who will have entrusted to them full power to inquire into the whole subject, and to report to the Government as quickly as possible. The question of the utilisation of the sewage has become one of greater urgency since the late report of the engineering inspectors on the quality of the water at present supplied to the inhabitants of the metropolis. That report points out that although the water now supplied is nearly twice as pure as it was five years ago, yet that, until measures are taken to prevent the Thames from being polluted by the sewage from towns above the points whence the supplies are taken, it will be impossible to prevent the water, as these towns increase in size, from being made worse than it now is. Should the report of the commission be to the effect that sewage can be deodorised and advantageously employed, an Act of Parliament may be expected prohibiting all towns from polluting streams which are used for domestic and drinking purposes.

COLLEGE OF DENTISTS OF ENGLAND.—A meeting of the members of the dental profession was held on Tuesday evening, at the Freemasons' Tavern, for the purpose of considering the rules, framed by their committee, for the governance of the body, and for the election of council and officers for the ensuing year. About 100 gentlemen assembled on the occasion; and James Robinson, Esq., was unanimously elected President; Messrs. W. Champton, Robert Hepburn, J. Harley, A. Canton, H. Jacob, H. Lidcott, D. Mackenzie, J. Merryweather, J. Underwood, C. Rogers, A. Thomas, and Mr. Hunt, of Yeovil, for the council; Mr. Peter Mathews, treasurer; Messrs. C. J. Fox, A. Hill, and Samuel L. Kymer, secretaries.

IMPROVEMENTS AT THE ROYAL MINT.—A large number of mechanics and labourers have lately been engaged in making extensive alterations at the back of the Royal Mint, Tower-hill. On Wednesday forenoon numerous buildings were in course of demolition on the south side of Rosemary-lane and other parts adjacent, to make room for the improvements intended for the enlargement of the coining departments, which are to be carried out forthwith.

JUVENILE VAGRANTS.—The Earl of Shaftesbury presided on Tuesday night at the annual meeting of the Britannia-court Industrial Institution, the object of which is to cultivate habits of industry among the young vagrant boys in the neighbourhood of King's-cross. At the close of the proceedings a collection was made in aid of the funds of the society.

THE EMBEZZLEMENTS BY A CLERK OF THE GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY.—At the Central Criminal Court, on Tuesday last, Thomas Snell pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing an order for the payment of £500, and also with embezzling and stealing two others, value £44 11s., the property of his employers, the directors of the Great Northern Railway Company. He was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment.

A LONDON FOG.—A dense fog prevailed throughout the metropolis from an early hour on Tuesday morning until the evening, causing great delay to the trains on the various railways. The river steam-boats and all kinds of small craft ceased running after nine o'clock in the morning.

ACCIDENT ON THE RIVER.—LOSS OF THREE LIVES.—On Sunday evening, at a quarter-past six o'clock, a boat was coming down the river, on the south side, with seven persons in it—three young men and four females—making for the stairs on the west side of Blackfriars-bridge. By accident the boat struck with great force against the pier of the bridge. A panic seized all the party—the females shrieked for help, and all rushed towards the end of the boat nearest to the stairs. The boat was overturned, and the whole party were thrown into the water. Several boats put off from the stairs, and succeeded in rescuing the three young men and a young woman, but the boat then went down, carrying with it the other three young women, who were drowned.

THE ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBITION opened for the season on Wednesday last. The collection comprises a great number of drawings and designs of buildings, either completed or in the course of construction, or sent for competition, together with a display of new materials and inventions connected with building. The rooms of the Suffolk-street Gallery are completely filled with such objects; and to all who take an interest in the progress of architecture the exhibition possesses great interest. The most prominent part of the exhibition is occupied by designs sent for competition for the building of the Liverpool Free Library and Museum, for the competition for the Cathedral of Lille, and for the Rotherham Grammar School. On Tuesday there was an opening meeting and a *conversazione*, which was most numerously attended. Earl De Grey occupied the chair at the commencement of the evening. His Lordship enlivened his speech with several anecdotes connected with art, and mentioned his own efforts to furnish a design for a washing-stand in the Viceregal Lodge at Dublin, to the great astonishment of the workmen there, one of whom exclaimed, "Sure, his Excellency can draw a washing-stand like an upholsterer!" The *conversazione* altogether passed off with great *éclat*.

RUSSELL INSTITUTION.—There was a soiree at the Russell Institution on Tuesday evening, as an introduction to the lecture season. The suite of large rooms was thrown open to the company, and in the lecture-room refreshments were provided. Mr. Salaman and several amateur vocalists enlivened the evening by singing a variety of popular songs.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN ALDERSGATE.—On Wednesday morning, about two o'clock, a fire broke out on the premises of Mr. Solomon Maw, surgical instrument maker, 11, Aldersgate-street, and in the course of a few hours destroyed property worth several thousand pounds. The building was insured in the Union Office for £4000, and the stock for £4000 in the Imperial and £4800 in the Atlas.

HEALTH OF LONDON.—The total number of deaths registered in the week that ended last Saturday is 1243, and exhibits a decrease on the number for the preceding week, which was 1315. The mean temperature, which had been 41 deg. in November, fell to nearly 35 deg. in the first week of this month, and rose again last week to 51.3 deg. In the ten weeks corresponding with the last week of the years 1846-55 the average number of deaths was 1289. Last week the births of 890 boys and 821 girls, in all 1711 children, were registered in London. In the ten corresponding weeks of the years 1846-55 the average number was 1461.

OBITUARY OF EMINENT PERSONS.

FATHER MATHEW.

The champion of the great Irish temperance movement, the Very Rev. Theobald Mathew, or, as he was more familiarly called, Father Mathew, died in Ireland on the 8th inst., after an illness of long duration, the result of his constant and enthusiastic exertions in the admirable endeavour which he made to mitigate one of the worst of human ills, and to rescue mankind from its disastrous influence. Father Theobald Mathew was a member of a respectable family, illegitimately connected with the extinct noble house of Mathew, Earls of Llandaff. His father was bailiff to the then Lord Llandaff, at his seat of Thomastown, in the county of Tipperary. Father Mathew was born at Thomastown, in 1790. Having early lost his parents in distressed circumstances, he and his brothers and sisters became the care of Lord Llandaff and his family. One daughter, Anne, was brought up by the late Lady Elizabeth Mathew, who was the last of her house, and who was celebrated for her charity and benevolence. Father Mathew's more immediate protector was Gertrude, late Countess of Llandaff. He was placed at the lay academy of Kilkenny, where he remained for seven years. He then proceeded to Maynooth and to Rome, and in four years was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in Dublin. He took religious vows as a Capuchin, and he entered upon his clerical labours at Cork, where he resided, and where as a priest he gained popularity by his indefatigable exertions in the cause of the poor. He also secured the building of a magnificent church at Cork, at the cost, it is said, of £15,000, and the buying of the city Botanical Gardens, which he converted into a cemetery, where he buried the poor of Cork without fee or reward. The great and crying vice of the Irish at this time was their degrading habit of drunkenness, and so far had this extended, that the Mayor of Limerick on one occasion declared that nearly eighty out of one hundred and fifty suicides within a year had been traceable to intoxication. Some members of the Society of Friends were the first who endeavoured to mend this state of things, so far as concerned the city of Cork. Finding, however, that they made but little or no progress in arresting the march of drunkenness, early in the year 1838 they applied to Father Mathew for his advice and assistance. Notwithstanding his own views and opinions as a Roman Catholic priest, he readily joined his Protestant friends, and he put himself at the head of the Cork Temperance Society on the 10th of April, 1838. He began his part of the enterprise by quietly and unostentatiously holding public meetings at the Horse Bazaar, Cork, twice a week. He there addressed his auditors upon the true germ of their misery—the whisky-bottle; and he urged its remedy—the pledge not to drink any spirits, wine, or fermented liquors whatsoever. For a year and a half he found that his efforts made but little way, when suddenly the conversion of some notorious drunkards in Cork spread his fame among the excitable and enthusiastic people of Cork, Kerry, and Limerick. By the close of the summer of 1839 the agitation extended, and during that autumn, in his progress through Ireland, Father Mathew had the happiness of witnessing several hundred thousand of his countrymen taking the pledge at his hands. The prestige of this success, combined with the lustre of his personal character, rendered him far and near an object of wondering veneration. The pledge from his hands became, in the eyes of the multitude, of holy and almost sacramental virtue, though he did his best to remove that extreme opinion. From town to town his advancement resembled a triumphal march. The authorities paid him honour; and the pledge, with his blessing, was universally demanded. He went to Dublin in March, 1840; to Scotland in August, 1842; and to England in July, 1843. In England he was welcomed with enthusiasm, as also in the United States, whence he returned in 1851. Father Mathew and his family, in a pecuniary sense, were considerable losers by his self-devotion to the furtherance of temperance. His own brother was the proprietor of a large distillery when the Father began his work. Nevertheless this brother supported Father Mathew with his purse, and aided that great good work which ruined his own trade and reduced him to bankruptcy. Father Mathew himself came to poverty and debt through his benevolent errand. In 1842 died the last member of the noble house which had so constantly helped and befriended him—Lady Elizabeth Mathew; and her property passed to a relative, the Viscount de Chabot. Father Mathew's funds eventually entirely failed him. To meet his wants, and pay a tribute to his worth, Government settled upon him an annuity of 396*l.* a sum which, after all, was only enough to pay the annual premium of an insurance policy held by his creditors as a security for his debts. This pension of 396*l.*, and an incomplete testimonial erected at Mount Patrick, Cork, were the sole visible marks of gratitude Father Mathew experienced from the public while living; but to the reward or glory of such a man, alive or dead, memorials of any kind must be of little moment. His own recompense was not of this world; and, as to his earthly fame, the lasting blessing that must accrue from the suppression, or even the decrease, of drunkenness will ever suffice to preserve and sanctify his memory.

* * Several Memoirs are unavoidably deferred.

WILLS.—The will of Field Marshal the Right Hon. Viscount Hardinge, G.C.B., has been proved in London under 80,000*l.*; also have been proved the wills of Lieut.-General Sir John Rolt, K.C.B., K.C.; Sir Edward Sherlock Gooch, Bart., M.P. for East Suffolk, 80,000*l.*; Charles Walker, Esq., Seymour House, Jubilee-place, Chelsea, and of New Inn, formerly of Old Jewry, 100,000*l.*; Miss Elizabeth Mary Miller, of Anley Manor-house, Hants, 30,000*l.*; William Cox, of Dorchester, 14,000*l.* Miss Ann Dupree, of York-place, City road, has made a curious will, and, amongst other legacies, has bequeathed to the Friendly Female Society 300*l.*, the interest to be distributed to poor single women of good character, or widows above forty, having bad sight, and who are hardly able to work, being English Protestants; to the Rev. Mrs. Hetherington's Charity for the Blind at Christ's Hospital, 500*l.*; Aged Pilgrims' Society, 300*l.*; Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 300*l.*; Asylum for Idiots, Park-house, Highgate, 300*l.*

AN ECCENTRIC PHILANTHROPIST.—A gentleman named Boulanger, residing in the Rue d'Alger, at Paris, died a few days ago, and in his apartments were found no fewer than ninety-five different wills or codicils of wills, written on scraps of paper, on the backs of old letters and circulars, in the most informal and confused manner. By these documents M. Boulanger had bequeathed a large part of his fortune, which was considerable, although he lived in a very parsimonious way, to a number of persons who were not connected with him, and whom he had never seen in his life. It was his habit, whenever he heard, or read in the newspapers, of any remarkable instance of virtue or self-sacrificing courage in real life, to take his pen and immediately to write, upon the first piece of paper that came to hand, a bequest in favour of the person named; and he laid the strictest injunctions upon his executors and heirs to take care that these legacies should all be paid without any dispute or delay.

REPEAL OF THE INCOME-TAX.—On Wednesday a public meeting was held at the Guildhall, Shrewsbury (the Mayor in the chair), for the purpose of petitioning Parliament against the continuance of the Income-tax beyond the 5th of April next. There was a numerous attendance of the principal inhabitants and tradesmen of the town, and a unanimous opinion expressed as to the unjust and oppressive nature of the impost. A petition to the House of Commons in accordance with these sentiments was prepared and adopted, and the borough and county members were requested to give it their support in Parliament.



PASSENGERS FOR ENGLAND AT CRONSTADT.—SKETCHED BY R. T. LANDELLS.

CRONSTADT IN THE ICE AND SNOW.

We resume our Artist's Sketches of the extraordinary scenes which he witnessed at Cronstadt on his return to England.

PASSENGERS CROSSING FROM ORANIENBAUM TO CRONSTADT. On Friday, November 7th, the ice began to form, and continued till it was firm enough to bear on the Sunday, thus enabling passengers who had been waiting for some days at Oranienbaum to cross over to

Cronstadt to meet the steam-boats. The party I have sketched had been ice-bound at the above-mentioned place, and had arranged to go in the *Emperor* steamer; but the captain of this vessel—having no desire to winter at Cronstadt—left before her cargo was completed.



PASSENGERS CROSSING FROM ORANIENBAUM TO CRONSTADT.—SKETCHED BY R. T. LANDELLS.



SCENE ON THE MERCHANTS' MOLE AT CRONSTADT.—SKETCHED BY R. T. LANDELLS.

After some difficulty, they arranged with a party of mujiks, with sledges, to convey them over. The ice was firm, but very rough, in consequence of the quantity of packed ice; and as there were many dangerous places they had to make a considerable detour, thereby lengthening the journey some three hours. They started from Oranienbaum about six and arrived in Cronstadt at ten, none the worse for their journey.

When the ice is not strong an *avant-garde* mujik precedes the party with a pole, to try the different parts; two more follow in file; then a sledge with the luggage; next the passengers—those who prefer it riding—are drawn in a sledge by three mujiks. The mujiks have sheepskin coats (with the wool inside), fur caps and gloves, and felt coverings for the feet.

CUTTING OUT VESSELS AT CRONSTADT.

When merchant vessels are overtaken by the frost, and when the ice has not set in for any great distance down the Gulf, the captains of the ships call a meeting, and agree to pay so many roubles for being "cut out." They make various arrangements: sometimes they agree to pay so much if they get clear, and nothing if unsuccessful. The men I saw engaged in the work of cutting were principally sailors, with some few soldiers and mujiks. The sailors wear dark-green caps with eardrops to them, a kind of canvas coat lined with wool, leathern gauntlets lined with wool, and their trousers turned into the boots. The implement they use for breaking the ice is a long pole with an iron spike at the end; they work at different places making holes, in which, when made, they insert the pole and employ it as a lever; they also use the hatchet. The vessel having the sails all set is driven by the wind, and materially assists in the process, which is represented in the illustration upon the front page.

PASSENGERS FOR ENGLAND, SKETCHED AT CRONSTADT.

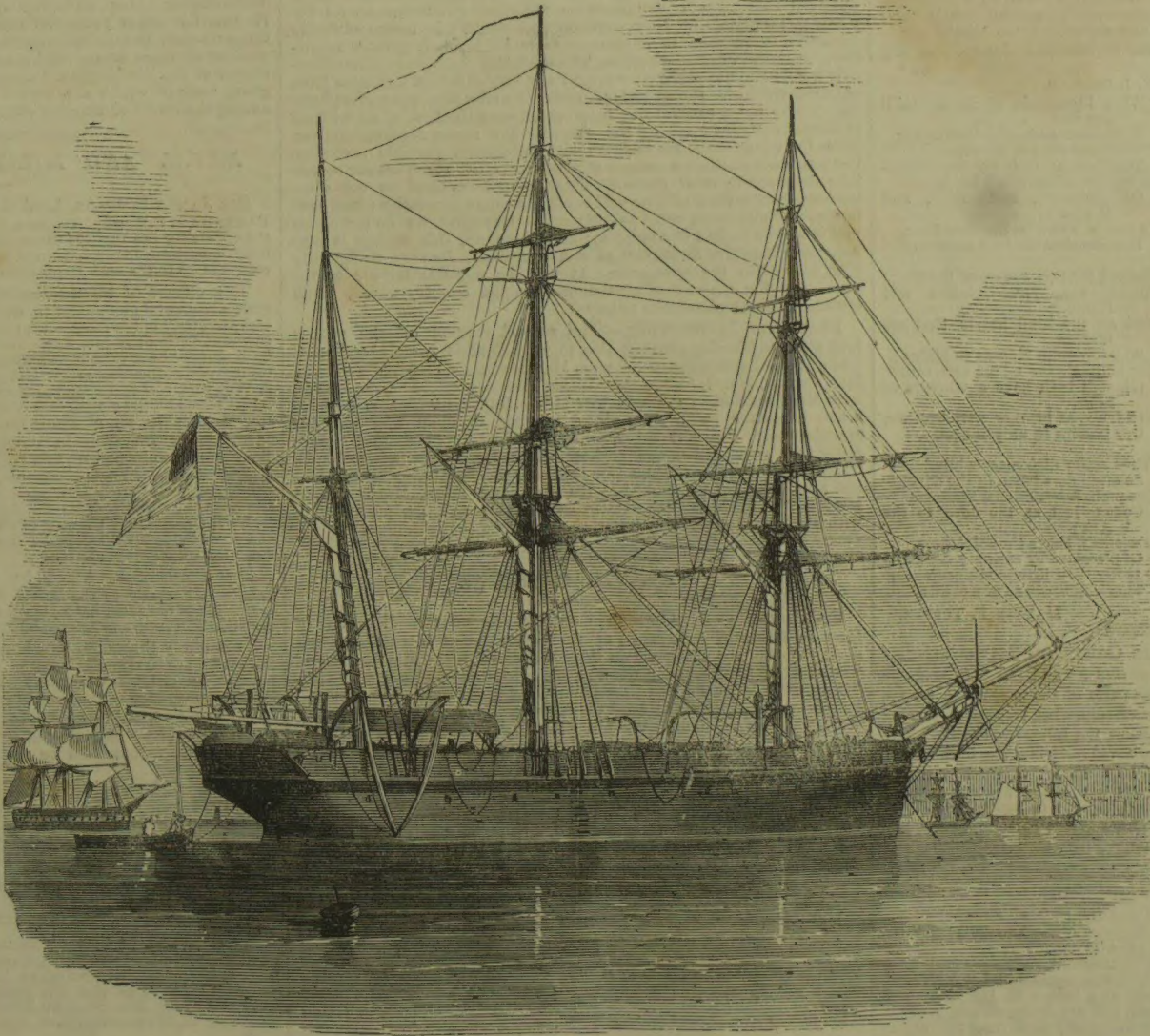
The group seen in this sketch are poor benighted travellers at Cronstadt. On Sunday we succeeded in breaking through the ice, a short distance, when we had the misfortune to go on shore immediately in front of Menschikoff Fort: as, however, we were on a peaceable mission we had nothing to fear from the frowning guns above. Various means were tried to get the vessel off, and large sums were paid for the loan of Government hawsers; but just when we thought the tug was coming and we were to get off, the hawsers broke. On Monday the hawsers were again tried, but without any good result, and it appeared as if we were to be under the fostering care of the Menschikoff Fort for the winter.

The discontented passengers arranged to retrace their steps to Oranienbaum, and thence to Revel, where the ice does not set in till later in the season. They talked of fresh purchases, in the way of "schoobas," as travelling in sledges at night-time is not so agreeable if poorly clad. It was then agreed to wait and see what the morrow would produce. The captain, seeing little chance of getting his vessel off, had already commenced taking the casks of tallow out of the fore hold as the only chance of getting her off. After taking out some sixty casks we were hauled out of our difficulties, amidst the cheers of those on deck and on shore.

The next thing to do was to reshuffle the tallow casks—for which purpose a stage was erected from the shore to the vessel, and the reloading was proceeded with vigorously till night. The passengers were in better humour; still there were doubts as to getting away—the ice having increased in thickness; but with hope for the best we returned to our cold cabins. In the morning the loading was resumed; and we walked on shore, as the ice was firm all round us. We proceeded through

THE MERCHANTS' MOLE, AT CRONSTADT,

which presented a curious appearance, with all the ice-bound vessels with sails set. Here were seen sailors carrying their dinners from the cook-house to their respective ships, sailors with small sledges conveying different commodities; groups sliding, &c.; officers with large cloaks, and their heads enveloped in a mass of fur. The building seen at the end is the Dvor, or market. The more cautious carry boat-hooks, which, in case of an immersion, they throw across the ice; they are thus enabled to draw themselves out if no assistance is near. The natives invariably carry a pole or boat-hook. The holes that are made, and which are soon covered over with a thin ice and drift snow, render walking on the ice very dangerous. We proceeded on our walk to the shore, when, after remaining some time, we returned over the ice to our steam-boat, where they had not yet completed the reshuffling. The hatches were once more loosened down, and all was excitement—the screw having been kept going at intervals, to prevent the ice forming at the stern. We had several feet of open water behind. Our captain now mounted the rostrum, and the order "easy astern" was communicated to some invisibles below; then the order for full speed was given. We moved slowly, crushing and forcing the ice, which broke into large blocks of four and five inches in thickness. Suddenly we stopped, when a sailor walked up to the bow, and threw a letter on board. We then went astern full speed, and made another attempt, and proceeded slowly, but were nearing the track made by the *North Sea*, in the morning. The mujiks and others who were engaged in cutting vessels out were warned loudly to move off, as the ice was breaking into large blocks. The mujiks danced, and seemed fearless. The different vessels cheered us as we passed; then another stoppage; one more attempt, and the good ship *Ward Jackson* entered into the *North Sea's* track, which was comparatively easy navigation—occasionally falling in with small fields of ice. We passed the *North Sea* lying to, perhaps waiting to see whether there would be a change of weather to enable her to



THE ARCTIC DISCOVERY SHIP "RESOLUTE," PRESENTED TO HER MAJESTY BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

discharge her cargo at Cronstadt instead of Revel. We next passed a Swedish vessel that had been out through by the ice and gone down head foremost; the flag was flying, for they had not time to strike it. The crew were all saved in the long-boat. After this we had a very fair passage, with occasional squalls, which are to be expected at this season of the year. We went on shore at Copenhagen, and saw what could be seen in so short a time. We anchored off Elsinore for the night. After leaving Elsinore we encountered a heavy gale, and were obliged to run back for six hours to seek shelter. We remained all night. The weather moderating the next morning, we pursued our homeward course, and arrived at West Hartlepool safe and well. R. T. L.

THE ARCTIC SHIP "RESOLUTE."

THE interest excited at Portsmouth by the arrival of the Arctic ship *Resolute* continues unabated. The only difficulty felt is to find out the best mode of acknowledging the compliment which has been paid to this country by the United States' Government and Congress, and of expressing our desire to live in cordial friendship with the American people. The weather on Friday night was so thick, and the wind was so high, that it was almost impossible to communicate with Spithead, but at five o'clock on Saturday morning the *Sprightly* steamer was sent out to the *Resolute* with a goodly supply of the finest beef, vegetables, and other articles from the Royal Naval Stores at Clarence-yard. The weather was still very rough, the wind blowing a gale, the rain falling in torrents, and thunder and lightning pealing and flashing in a most extraordinary manner, considering the time of year. The *Sprightly* nevertheless held on, and delivered her stores, which it may be presumed were acceptable on board, after the twenty-seven days the *Resolute* had been coming from New York. The length of this voyage may be accounted for by the peculiarity of the *Resolute's* build, and the heavy timbers with which she had been fortified to enable her to stand collisions with the ice. Indeed, it is considered that the American officers and crew must have exercised great skill in seamanship in getting her home so fast, forty days having been set down as the period to which the voyage would extend.

On Saturday Commander Hartstein was embarked by the steam-tender *Sprightly*, and landed near the official residence of the United States' Consul, the Chevalier Vincent Pappalardo, at the Platform Battery, where he was met by Commodore Sir Thomas Maitland, C.B., of her Majesty's ship *Excellent*, the Commander-in-Chief *pro tem*, of the port, Vice-Admiral Sir George Seymour being absent on leave. Sir Thomas offered Captain Hartstein, in the name of her Majesty's Government, everything in the way of ship's provisions, pilotage, and, indeed, everything else the officers or crew could require during their sojourn in England. After this interview Chevalier Pappalardo presented Captain Hartstein, at the Government-house, to the Lieutenant-Governor, by whom he was most warmly greeted; then to the Mayor of the borough, and then to Flag Captain G. H. Seymour, C.B., on board the flag-ship *Victory*.

Captain Hartstein has accepted the invitation of the Mayor and Corporation to dine with them, but could not name a day, owing to the necessity for transacting the official business connected with his courteous mission. Captain Hartstein and his next in command partook of an elegant dejeuner at the Consulate, and the former left for London by the 1.45 p.m. train on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, to deliver his despatches to the British Admiralty and the American Minister. The Government sent down a special messenger on Sunday night to Portsmouth to order suites of apartments and every accommodation of the best class for the American officers at the Portland Hotel, Southsea.

On Tuesday last the Queen, accompanied by Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, the Princess Royal, and the Princess Alice, paid a visit to the Arctic ship. The *Resolute*, dressed in her colours, was lashed alongside of the Royal embarkation place at Trinity Wharf, Cowes. The English and American flags were flying at the peak, and as soon as the Queen set her foot on the deck the Royal Standard was hoisted at the main. The *Retribution* fired a salute, the boats' crews "tossed" their oars, and the ship's company, standing on the rail, received her Majesty with three rounds of cheers. Captain Hartstein received the Royal party at the gangway, and the officers, in full uniform, were grouped on each side. All the officers were presented to the Queen by Captain Hartstein, who then addressed her Majesty in the following words:—"Allow me to welcome your Majesty on board the *Resolute*, and, in obedience to the will of my countrymen and of the President of the United States, to restore her to you, not only as an evidence of a friendly feeling to your sovereignty, but as a token of love, admiration, and respect to your Majesty personally." The Queen replied with a gracious smile, "I thank you, Sir." After completing the inspection of the ship the Royal party retired amid the enthusiastic acclamations of the spectators.

In our next publication we shall give Engravings of this interesting event in the history of two great nations.

The following ballad, first published in the *European Times* American mail of July 26, has gone the round of the papers in the United States, and has been well appreciated by our Transatlantic cousins. It is, however, less known in England; and, as such international sentiments cannot be too extensively circulated, while their publication at this time will be specially acceptable, we gladly accede to the wish of a correspondent, who has requested the insertion of Mr. Tupper's verses:—

AN INTERNATIONAL BALLAD.

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| <p>A gracious and generous action Outweighing all sins on each side, Outshaming the treasors of faction, Ambition, and folly, and pride; No jealousies now shall be rankling, No silly suspicions intrude, But round the remembrance of Franklin Our brotherly loves be renewed!</p> <p>The <i>Resolute</i>, lying forsaken, The sport of the winds and the ice, By luck to America taken, Is—nobly restored without price! Nor only refusing all ransom, But, fitted anew for the Queen, In a manner more gracious and handsome, And kinder than ever was seen.</p> <p>We, too, were not lacking of honour, For, waiving all claim to the ship, When Buddington's flag was upon her, We flung away quibble and quip.— "He saved her—and so let him take her," But handsome America said, "I guess, cousin, that we can make her A prettier present, instead."</p> <p>Albury.</p> | <p>"With thousands of dollars we'll buy her, With thousands of dollars repair (Diplomacy cannot take fire) That here at least isn't fair)— In honour of Britain's ice-heroes, Of Franklin, and Ross, and McClure, To gentle Victoria, the Sea-Rose, Her <i>Resolute</i> thus we restore!"</p> <p>Huzzah for this generous meeting! Huzzah, too, for Grinnell and Kane, And all the kind hearts that are beating. So nobly from Kansas to Maine! Our instincts are all for each other (Though both have a tincture of heat), And truly, as brother with brother, Our bosoms in unison beat.</p> <p>When crafty diplomacy's blindness So often does harm in the dark, One plain international kindness Comes—just as the dove to the Ark; O wisdom, above the astuteness Of placemen by cunning defiled,— O better than manhood's astuteness This kindness as of a child!</p> <p>MARTIN F. TUPPER.</p> |
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TO REMOVE CREASES FROM THE COLOURED SUPPLEMENT.—(To the Editor of the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.)—As it is probable that many of your subscribers in various parts of the world may receive your beautiful COLOURED SUPPLEMENT somewhat creased in passing through the Post-office, I beg to suggest the following simple means by which creases may be entirely removed:—Damp the back of the sheet with a moist sponge or flannel; then lay a sheet of paper over the damped sheet, and iron it with a common flat clothes-iron, moderately heated, until the creases disappear. I invariably apply the ironing process to my regular weekly number of the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS directly it arrives, and whilst it is yet damp; but in this case I iron the illustrated side, and it is astonishing how much it improves the appearance of the engravings and letterpress.—Yours, W. L.

A CHRISTMAS PIE.—In the books of the Salters' Company is a receipt "For to make a moost choyce Paiste of Gamys to be eten at ye Feste of Chrystemasse" (17th Richard II. A.D. 1394). A pie so made by the Company's cook in 1836 was found excellent. It consisted of a pleasant hare, and capon; two partridges, two pigeons, and two rabbits; all boned and put into paste in the shape of a bird, with the livers and hearts, two mutton kidneys, forced-meats, and egg-balls, seasoning, spices, catsup, and pickled mushrooms, filled up with gravy made from the various bones.—*Curiosities of London.*

The monthly meeting of the Royal London Yacht Club will be held at the Caledonian Hotel, Adelphi-terrace, on Monday. The annual ball of the club is fixed for Wednesday, the 15th of February next.

MUSIC.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—The first of the usual Christmas performances of the "Messiah" took place on Friday, the 12th inst., before one of the largest audiences ever assembled in Exeter-hall. The opening recitatives, "There were shepherds," &c., which follow the "pastoral symphony," altogether unnerved Mrs. Hepworth, a debutante of great promise, who made her first appearance before a London audience on the occasion. Her intonation was so false, owing to the excessive trepidation under which she suffered, that it was impossible to know what she was singing. The brilliant air, "Rejoice greatly," brought this little drama to an end; Mr. Costa was compelled to stop the orchestra, and Mr. Sims Reeves to lead away the fair debutante, amid the sympathising and kindly applause of the whole audience. "He shall feed his flock" was of necessity passed over; and the chorus taking up "His yoke is easy" brought the first part of the oratorio to an end. In the course of the second part Mr. Bowley, a member of the committee, informed the audience that Miss Louisa Vinning had consented to undertake the remainder of the soprano music "at a moment's notice," demanding indulgence for her on the plea that she had never publicly sung in the "Messiah." Miss Vinning then made her appearance, and was loudly welcomed. Before she was half through "How beautiful are the feet" she had perfectly convinced her hearers that no apology was necessary. This conviction was trebled in force by the manner in which she gave "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Each air was followed by a genuine burst of applause; and Miss Vinning sat down, having achieved, impromptu, a success as complete as if she had been preparing for it assiduously a twelvemonth in advance. Although new to the Sacred Harmonic Society, this lady is not unknown in musical circles. Many may remember her a child, playing cleverly upon the harp, under the cognomen of the "Infant Sappho;" and of later years a still greater number have recognised in Miss Louisa Vinning one of the most successful and promising pupils of Mr. Frank Mori, who has, until lately, had the entire charge of her musical education. In other respects the performance of the "Messiah" was admirable. Of the choruses it is unnecessary to speak; but the solo singers were equally to be commended. Mr. Sims Reeves (who made his first appearance for the season, and who has only just recovered from his severe indisposition) has rarely sung the great airs and recitatives—from "Comfort ye, my people," to "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron"—in more masterly style. Dignity, pathos, and energy are alternately demanded in the many and various pieces with which Handel has enriched the tenor part in his "Messiah," and these were found united to faultless musical execution. Herr Formes sang his best, and, as usual, afforded immense satisfaction to the audience. In "The trumpet shall sound" the obligato part of Mr. T. Harper was as remarkable as ever. In the contralto music Miss Dolby always sings too conscientiously to leave a chance for criticism. The custom now established of giving the air, "But who shall abide," to the contralto (instead of bass), and "Thou didst not leave his soul in hell" to the tenor (instead of soprano), is satisfactory, inasmuch as it is in accordance with Handel's intentions. "The Messiah" was repeated last night (Friday) for the first appearance of Madame Clara Novello.

THE approach of the period of a hundred years since the death of Handel (which took place on the 3rd of April, 1759) has already given rise to schemes of centenary celebrations of that event, both in Germany and this country. Such a celebration has been projected at Halle, in Saxony, the mighty master's birthplace; and in England—which, above all other countries (even that of his birth), is entitled to claim him as her own—a great commemoration has been planned by our Sacred Harmonic Society, who have already commenced active measures for carrying it into effect. By way of preparation for the commemoration itself a preliminary "Grand Handel Festival" is to take place next spring, the locality being the central transept of the Crystal Palace, with a choral and instrumental orchestra of two thousand three hundred performers. Pope described Handel as—

The great Briareus, with his hundred hands.

What would Pope or Handel himself have said to a musical giant, whose hands were numbered by thousands? It is proposed that the performance shall occupy four days, during which three of Handel's oratorios shall be given. The society have called for the assistance of the various choral bodies throughout the United Kingdom; and this assistance, we learn, has already been volunteered to an extent which will remove every difficulty in the way of mustering so immense a host. On this score we never apprehended any difficulty; there are Handelian enthusiasm and vocal talent in England sufficient to supply the utmost possible demand for strength; but some other doubts have arisen in our mind which, as they do not seem to have been ever started, may be (and we hope are) groundless. Is it practicable to "handle" such an army as to obtain that perfectly precise and simultaneous movement without which chorus-singing would be mere confusion? We may presume that this is practicable, since the experienced and skilful Costa has accepted the post of commander-in-chief. But yet there seems to be a physical impediment which no precision of movement can obviate. Let it be observed that 2300 is an immense multitude, sufficient to fill the whole of Exeter Hall. Now, suppose this multitude arranged in the orchestra, in an area so enormous as to hold a still greater multitude; and the performers must be at very different distances from each individual in the audience. Sound travels slowly, as everybody knows who has measured the interval between the flash of a gun fired at a small distance reaching the eye and the report reaching the ear. Were the whole orchestra to move with the utmost possible precision, the voices of the singers nearest the listener must reach his ear sooner than those of the most distant. Thus, sounds uttered at the same mathematical instant of time will reach his ear in succession; and confusion, it would seem, must be the result. Of course, we do not affirm that it will be so, but it may be so; and, therefore, this matter is perhaps not altogether unworthy of consideration. *Du reste*, we heartily wish success to the enterprise. It will be a noble tribute to the memory of the greatest of musicians from the country which, of all others, has the highest title to pay it.

BEAUMONT INSTITUTION.—The second concert of the season took place on Monday evening, Dec. 15, attended by a crowded audience. The principal artists engaged were Madame Rudersdorff, Miss Banks, Miss Palmer, Mr. G. Calkin, Mr. Winn, Mr. Case, and Mr. Sims Reeves, with Mr. Frank Mori as conductor. Madame Rudersdorff, whom we have heard in better voice, sang in a manner to elicit the warmest approbation. "Robert toi que j'aime" and "We met" were given with great power and pathos. Sims Reeves was admirable in "Fra peço," his fine voice, never fresher, appealing to the sympathies and intelligence of all present. He also sang Frank Mori's "Good Morrow," which was enthusiastically encored; and the pretty duet, with Madame Rudersdorff, "Parigi o cara."

THE THEATRES, &c.

ST. JAMES'S.—A German company under the direction of Herr L. Grünfeld have taken up their quarters at this theatre for a short period. We witnessed on Monday, Kotzebue's little comedy of "Dar todtte Neffe," and the one-act piece of Rudolph Genée, entitled "Durch." We were also promised a *Leustspiel* called "Ein Arzt;" but, in consequence of the Lord Chamberlain's permission not having arrived, it was omitted. We are afraid that the acting, taken altogether, is of too amateur an order; nevertheless, there were good points in the performance of both dramas. Herr Rober, as the ship captain, *Hans Puff*, was sufficiently energetic; and Herr Straube, as the lying valet, was amusing. The former well exposed his feeling on the supposed death of his nephew *Fritz Böhm* (Herr Julius), and the reconciliation scene was effectively realised. Fräulein Ernst, as the *Gast-wirthin*, appeared to want freedom of style; but, though not a little angular in her general action, as she warmed up into the character, evinced considerable intelligence. "Durch" was still better performed. Herr F. Weiss, as *Stürmer*, the decided lover, manifested great spirit throughout, and was as thorough-going as we could desire. Elise, the daughter of the stocking-seller, was very prettily interpreted by Fräulein Rohrbach. Between the pieces a little girl, called *Seonora Marietta*, danced a *Spanischer Nationaltanz* most charmingly. She is, we understand, the daughter of Dr. Hoffmann, is not yet eight years old, and may, we think, be regarded as in some degree an infant prodigy. The performances concluded with a concert.

MISS P. HORTON'S POPULAR ILLUSTRATIONS.—Mr. and Mrs. German Reed have introduced a pleasant variety into their deservedly-favourite entertainment. The first part is entirely new, and bears the title of "Our Ward's Governess." It does not in any respect fall short

of those portions with which the public are already familiar. The framework is simply this:—Mr. and Mrs. Reed have accepted a proposal made them by a foreign adventurer, a certain *Vicomte le Fanfaronnade*, to undertake a professional tour, like other musical celebrities, through many distant parts of the world, not excepting the interior of Africa and Central America; and, having a ward, whom they must leave at home, they advertise for a governess for the young lady. This brings a succession of candidates, all personated by Mrs. Reed; while Mr. Reed in his own person receives them. The candidates, of course, are a set of originals. There is *Miss Lucretia Mim*, an antiquated virgin of unimpeachable propriety and unbending rigidity; there is *Mrs. Carrickfergus Conolly*, a rattling Irishwoman, who comes to speak for her daughter, a sensitive damsel, too timid to speak for herself; and there is *Claudine Delacour*, a "strong-minded woman," after the Transatlantic fashion, who is up to everything, and not disconcerted by anything; there is also the *French Vicomte* himself, a swindler, by whom, and his accomplice, the strong-minded woman, poor Mr. and Mrs. Reed are effectually plundered, which forms the catastrophe of the drama. It is a capital little piece, well written, and full of smart satire. The various characters are sustained by Mrs. Reed with infinite spirit and humour; and the songs which she introduces, though in the style of burlesque, have much musical beauty, some of them being really charming. This additional matter will give new freshness to the entertainment, and maintain its well-merited popularity.

MR. GORDON CUMMING.—The Lion-hunter is again at home, and gave, on Wednesday afternoon, a private invitation to his encampment, where, surrounded by the spoils and trophies of his hunting achievements, he related to his friends the story of his exploits and adventures in South Africa. Mr. Cumming has much improved in the delivery of his lecture since we first heard him, and now dashes off his wonderful descriptions with great dramatic effect. He treads his stage, too, with dignity, and enchants as much by his person as by the wild narrative of his fortunes. The dioramic views are all of great excellence, and do credit to the pencils of Thomas, Weir, Leitch, the Haghes, Phillips, and Hobson. Between the parts an intermediate kind of entertainment is given, perfectly in harmony with the main business of the *scène*. Thus the native Bushman, Ruyter, exhibits the tracking of the lion, which he does effectually; his gesticulation being understood, though his language is unintelligible. Other of the Bush people, by name *Stofulus* and *Treny*, introduce with him the Bush Dance, and thereby afford a unique and not uninteresting kind of amusement. Altogether these scenes and stories and interludes are very refreshing, and take us at once out of the conventional life of this great city. We are on the plain, the river, the mountain, in the desert and the camp, by moonlight and midday, dreaming and waking, present with nature, and the human intelligence unsophisticated by manners, and thrown on its own resources, and learn to be brave, self-reliant, and free. This is the lesson read by the Lion-hunter; and may it be frequently repeated.

ST. MARTIN'S HALL.—In aid of the institution called the Strangers' Home, for Asiatics, Africans, and South-Sea Islanders, Mr. Henry Blackburn, on Tuesday, gave a lecture on the subject of Algeria. The speaker (who delivered himself with a *naïveté* which was as extraordinary as interesting) was dressed in North African costume, and exhibited a collection of sketches which he had made during his travels. The lecture was composed of topics sufficiently exciting—including a description of the Atlas mountains; of lion-hunting; of the Kabyles, the Arabs, and the Bedouins; and of the wars with the natives; glancing occasionally at Mahomet, and the religion, customs, and poetry of the Arabs. These particulars constituted the first part of the lecture, devoted to savage life. The second exhibited Algiers in more civilised points of view; and described the Grand Divan, Moors and Mauresques, mosques and marabouts, dancing and weddings, waitings and shavings *à fresco*, and bathings and battlings, military and domestic, including the Moorish *cuisine* and the "yadacé" with singular animation. The lecturer occasionally sat upon the platform during the delivery, and otherwise comported himself with freedom and ease. Mr. Blackburn is evidently very young, but has talents and enterprise that indicate much promise of future success.

On Wednesday morning, in the same place, Mr. Turley delivered a lecture on "Spiritual Manifestations"—in other words, on Table Turning. The lecture was divided into two parts, preceded by a musical performance on the piano. Persons were invited from among the audience to assist in the experiments. Tables were moved, rappings effected, and some answers given. But the process was so long that the meeting dissolved before a satisfactory result could be obtained. The *scène* was fairly conducted, but added nothing to our information on the subject.

MR. WILLIAM KNYVETT, the eminent glee-composer and singer, died on the 17th of November, in his seventy-eighth year. He retired into private life about thirteen years ago, and has since resided at Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, generally respected and esteemed. Mr. Knyvett held a high place in his profession. He was Gentleman of and Composer to her Majesty's Chapels Royal, and also a Lay Vicar of Westminster Abbey, all which appointments he enjoyed till his death. He was for thirty years the principal counter-tenor at the Ancient Concerts and the principal provincial music meetings; and for a number of years preceding his retirement he held the office of Conductor of the Birmingham Festivals. His compositions were chiefly glees, some of which are very beautiful, and have become popular among the lovers of English vocal harmony.

NAVAL AND MILITARY INTELLIGENCE.

SIR JAMES SIMPSON, LORD ROKEBY, and Colonel the Hon. W. L. PAKENHAM, C.B., who have been for some weeks engaged in investigating the claims for the Victoria Cross (the Order of Valour), have for a short time discontinued their meetings at the Horse Guards. Their labours are complete up to the 38th Regiment of Foot.

The officers of all the Regiments of the Guards are about to erect a memorial monument to the "officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates" of the Guards who fell in battle, or died from wounds or sickness, during the late war. The subscription for the memorial, which is to consist of a species of monument, to be placed, probably, upon the open space at the back of the Horse Guards, already amounts to a considerable sum, and will be as much as £4000 or £5000 before the list of subscriptions is finally closed. As the memorial is confined to the Guards, the subscriptions are, of course, limited to the Guards also.

The new steam-yacht named the *Emperor*, which arrived at Woolwich on the 28th ult., is to be fitted with a screw, and is otherwise in a forward state. When completed, she is to be sent, under the charge of one of the firm of Messrs. H. and C. Green, the builders, to be presented to the Emperor of Japan from the British Government. In the naval estimates it appears that the sum of £10,000 has been voted for the expenses of the yacht, yet it is computed that this amount will be inadequate to cover the total expenses.

The Lords of the Admiralty, in order to assimilate the rewards granted for service in the Royal Marine Corps with those awarded in regiments of the Line, have signified that the term of service in the Royal Marines is in future to be estimated by years and days only.

It is likely that a Major-General will be appointed to command the troops at Chatham, in consequence of the large increase of troops it is intended to station at Chatham for the purpose of being instructed in fortification and other engineering operations.

In future several barracks in a military district will be united, and placed under the control of an engineer officer, who will make periodical inspections and be responsible for the works required to be executed.

The working party of the Royal Engineers who are employed in the demolition of old Rochester-bridge, under the direction of Captain H. Schaw, have finished excavating three of the great shafts which lead to the galleries driven through the foundations of the bridge; and, as soon as the latter have been completed, the destruction of the first system of piers will take place. The quantity of gunpowder required for one of the explosions is about 500 lb. weight, which will be fired by means of the voltaic battery.

ANOTHER ARCTIC EXPEDITION.—The *Montreal Herald* states that the Arctic expedition fitted out by the Hudson Bay Company was to have started from Great Slave Lake some time since. The object of this expedition is to visit the locality where, according to information furnished by Dr. Rae, Sir John Franklin and his unfortunate companions perished; and to ascertain more fully, if possible, respecting their sad fate.

PROROGATION OF CONVOCATION.—On Wednesday morning the Convocation of the Prelates and Clergy of the province of Canterbury—which stood adjourned until that day—was prorogued by a commission from the Archbishop of Canterbury until Wednesday, the 4th Feb., 1857, when both houses will meet for the transaction of business.

TOWN AND TABLE TALK ON LITERATURE, ART, &c.

The finest collection of pictures of the English school as it existed between the years 1826 and 1856 was made by a private gentleman, and has just been given (subject to certain restrictions), in the finest sense of public spirit, to the British public. That the Vernon collection is very fine there cannot be a doubt; still less can there be a doubt that the Sheepshanks collection is still finer. Mr. Vernon bought by the advice of others—he had (most properly) little confidence in his own judgment. Mr. Sheepshanks bought in the full sense of an inborn and a cultivated taste. Mr. Vernon was surrounded by well-to-do Royal Academicians who toadied him into a taste. Mr. Sheepshanks rejected with proper contempt every toady within or without the pale of the Academy. Mr. Vernon bought very often badly—Mr. Sheepshanks was seldom misled. Mr. Vernon gave his collection to the public unconditionally, and the public has done nothing for him. Mr. Sheepshanks has just given his gallery to the nation—conditionally. The conditions have been accepted. What are they? The conditions have not yet been made public, nor have we permission to tell what we know respecting them. Thus much, however, may be told. Mr. Sheepshanks has bargained for a fitting receptacle in a good atmosphere with or without architecture. What he has he wants others to see. Her Majesty's Government have taken the collection on Mr. Sheepshanks's own terms, and we shall see before another year is out a well-lighted gallery in which this noble gift of a modest but noble-minded English gentleman can be seen to every advantage. The trustees of the National Gallery are to have nothing to do with the Sheepshanks collection. Mr. Sheepshanks properly distrusts commissions and irresponsible large-bodied, full-chaired, jobbed commissions and committees. The present President of the Board of Trade, Lord Stanley of Alderley, will be (officially) the first President of the Sheepshanks Gallery, and the magnates at Marlborough-house—able men—Messrs. Cole, Redgrave, and Robinson—will, of course, act under the president. The site of the Sheepshanks Gallery will be contiguous to the present un-Barry-like building which, who knows who? is erecting in pleasant Valetudinarian Brompton.

This mention of commissions recalls us to other "Talk." Read this from the *London Gazette* (Mr. Behan's authority, what better could man want?), and then a few words in addition:—

The Queen has been pleased to direct letters patent to be passed under the Great Seal, constituting and appointing the Right Hon. Lord Broughton, the Very Rev. Henry Hart Milman, D.D., Richard Ford, Esq., Michael Faraday, Esq., D.C.L., Charles Robert Cockerell, Esq., and George Richmond, Esq., to be her Majesty's Commissioners to determine the site of the new National Gallery, and to report on the desirableness of combining with it the Fine Art and Archaeological Collections of the British Museum, in accordance with the recommendation of the Select Committee on the National Gallery in 1853.

Now, no great objection is to be made to this committee. It has a touch of everything in it—even of nobility. But why Lord Broughton? What has Mr. Hobhouse, of Westminster, to do with art? Byron has made him immortal; a Blue-book about India has done perhaps more. On one man in this Royal Commission all thoughtful men rely—that man is Mr. Ford. Let Mr. Ford avoid the shoal on which Lord Ellesmere's British Museum Commission split,—hear an unfair-sided evidence, print a large folio, recommend much, back up little—do nothing, and effect nothing. On Mr. Ford (so all wise, thinking people say) our reliance is placed. A Commission is a drag; a Royal Commission is a double drag. Let Mr. Ford set to his task heartily, and we shall then see something done well and quickly;—almost as quickly as he *handbooked* Spain; for he is up in his subject, active, thoughtful, attentive, and resolute.

Her Majesty and the Prince continue to evince their deep-felt interest in the success of the Art-Treasures Exhibition at Manchester. His Royal Highness will open the Exhibition, and doubtless wonder at the treasures which his own cultivated mind has assisted, modestly but materially, in bringing together. Her Majesty will visit Manchester about June or July.

A well-known supporter of the old school—and good—of water-colour art has just been taken from among us: Mr. Frederick Nash is dead. Few men have done more to perpetuate English architecture of the best periods. He began in the year 1810 to exhibit at the Old Water-Colour Society, became a member the next year, retired about the year 1816, rejoined the body again, and died a member last week. There are few collectors of faithful art without some good example of his Hollar-like pencil.

Another man eminent in his way has followed Mr. Nash. Mr. M'lan (name puzzling to southern tongues) died at Hampstead during the present week. Scotchmen, mad or unmad about the unicorn or Sir William Wallace, all delighted in his Clan Chattan kind of acting. He painted fairly, but he acted within his circle well.

At the first Photographic meeting on Wednesday last the leading attractions were M. Delamotte's Oxford Views and the Leonardo da Vinci Last Supper—photographed unmistakably with all its stone and mortar setting, its additions and its wants.

Literary men are expressing surprise that the author of a little volume, entitled "A Rhymed Plea for Tolerance," published by Moxon many years ago, should have died worth £80,000 and left nothing to literature. It is true that his own contribution to literature was but small, and little is to be expected from disappointed literary men. Yet Mr. Kenyon enjoyed the society of authors, and fed the well-fed from a full-peopled kitchen.

It is understood that Mr. Charles Manby, who has, after seventeen years' service, resigned the post of Secretary to the Institution of Civil Engineers, has succeeded the late Mr. Starbuck, as the representative in London and on the Continent of the extensive engine-manufacturing firm of Robert Stephenson and Co., of Newcastle-on-Tyne. This position he is peculiarly qualified to fill, from his practical education and long connection with the mechanical world, the iron trade, and the Civil Engineers, as well as his extensive connection with foreign engineers, who are under such obligations to him for courtesies shown them in this country.

SIR BERNARD BURKE'S "PEERAGE AND BARONETAGE" FOR 1857 has just appeared, this being the nineteenth edition of this very complete Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary, which has for many years taken precedence of all works of its class. The additions and emendations have been brought down to the latest period of publication; and the volume presents an excellent specimen of compact arrangement for reference, and small but easily-readable type. With the "Peerage" has been issued the Second Part of Sir Bernard Burke's "History of the Landed Gentry," bringing the work midway towards completion, and presenting the same minute attention to heraldic and genealogical details as that which characterises the "Peerage." As records of family history, both works, in their lucid arrangement and admirably-condensed materials, present great advantages over their predecessors.

A CURRENCY CONFERENCE.—The German Currency Conference has recommenced, and the representatives of the following States now share in them:—Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Reuss, Hanover, Oldenburg, Birkenfeld, Wurttemberg, Baden, Hesse-Cassel, Hesse-Darmstadt, Hesse-Homburg, Selmsburg-Lippe, and Frankfurt. Travellers will be delighted to learn that they will soon be able to pay their way from one end of Germany to the other in the same gold or silver coin.

Efforts are making among the Scotch residents in Canada for the erection of a monument to Sir William Wallace.

FOX-HUNTING.—A Fox-hunting Correspondent thus writes:—A circumstance occurred with the Earl of Lonsdale's hounds on Saturday, the 6th inst., which proves that if the foxes of the present day have lost some of the go-a-head propensities of those of fifty years since, they still retain some of that cunning for which their *genus* has always been so celebrated. The hounds met at Chesham Bois, and proceeded to draw the cover of Mr. T. Tyrwhitt Drake, where a fox was immediately found; after running a ring of about three miles he returned to the cover where he first broke from, the hounds pressing him pretty closely; he crossed Mr. Drake's park, and, taking advantage of some very thin ice which still remained on the edges of the lake before the house, swam into the water some 300 yards, evidently endeavouring to keep the whole of his body, except the tip of his nose, under water. He would, doubtless, have entirely eluded the hounds had not some boys seen him enter the lake. When he was discovered the scene on the edge of the lake became very exciting, the huntsman, the evergreen Jim Morgan, on one side blowing his horn to induce the hounds to cross, while the whips on the other hark-halloed them on; but their efforts were ineffectual, for the ice was too frail to bear them, and they could not be got to see the nose of the fox. One at last crossed and passed within thirty yards of him; but he was too cunning to move, and remained unobserved. After endeavouring to dislodge him for some time, he was abandoned, and had the full benefit of his cunning. I may add that these hounds have had by no means good sport this season.

STAMPING LETTERS.—At the sitting of the Queen's Bench on Wednesday last Lord Campbell announced that he had received a communication from the Duke of Argyll, her Majesty's Postmaster-General, in reference to a note he addressed to his Grace on the subject of the indistinct manner in which post letters were stamped, and which very frequently led to a defeat of justice. The noble Duke's reply was highly satisfactory, and hereafter complaints against the Post-office in reference to the stamping of letters would be unnecessary.

OUTBREAKS IN CROATIA.—Serious collisions between the populace and the authorities are rumoured to have taken place in Croatia. In 1848 the Austrian Government promised that certain ecclesiastical and seigniorial taxes should be abolished. The Government now seeks to enforce the tenth on wine, and the agitation among the peasantry in consequence has assumed a serious aspect.

ANOTHER ATLANTIC STEAMER DISABLED.—The steam-ship *Hermann*, which left Southampton on the 10th inst. for New York with the English, French, and German mails, returned on Sunday evening last disabled, having broken the main shaft of her engine, being at the time of the accident 800 miles on her voyage.

FIRE INSURANCE DUTY.—The amount realised by the fire insurance duty in the year ended March last was £1,230,441.

PENNY RECEIPT STAMPS.—There has been an increase from receipt stamps in the year ended March of the sum of £257,631.

It is stated—and we believe not without foundation—that Major-Generals Sir George Anson and Nicholas Hamilton will have the Colonelcies or the 55th and 82nd Regiments, vacant by the deaths of Generals Butler and Milman.—*Globe*.

A letter from Rome of the 4th inst. states that the Papal Government is placed in a difficulty with respect to its troops which may produce serious consequences. Within the last three months it has lost more than a third of its Swiss troops, and it is daily losing more, their time of service having expired, and the men not wishing to renew their engagement.

The American Postmaster-General's report shows that on the 13th of June there were 25,565 post-offices. He recommends the abolition of the franking privilege, and compulsory prepayment on all transient printed matter.

Plans for the appropriation of the vacant space of ground at the south-east end of St. Paul's Cathedral, are ordered to be submitted to the Common Council.

The duty, at 1s. per quarter, on corn imported in the year ended March last was £353,066.

The *Kentish Mercury* states that no candidate can think of being elected for Greenwich unless he can put down "say" £6000.

MONETARY TRANSACTIONS OF THE WEEK.

(From our City Correspondent.)

The fluctuating state of the French Funds has had more or less influence upon National Stocks this week. In its early part prices were tolerably firm, although the business doing was by no means extensive. Since then they have slightly receded; yet they improved on Thursday. We may account for the fall from the fact that an improved demand for silver has sprung up for shipment to India and China, and that the next mail will carry out about £500,000 in that metal. The great activity in the demand for money has had its effect; and we understand that the Bank of England have made very large advances to the commercial body. As far as can be judged from present appearances, the demand for silver on Eastern account is likely to be much less active during next month. In that case we may have an easier Money Market, and possibly a lower range in the value of money. On Thursday, owing, we presume, to the improved position of the Bank of France, and the large increase in the reserve of notes—the total amount being over 5,000,000,—the Bank Directors lowered the minimum rate of discount to six per cent. This was immediately followed by a corresponding reduction in the rates in Lombard-street, and much satisfaction was generally expressed at the change.

The imports of bullion have been rather extensive—viz., 990,000 dols. from Mexico, the West Indies, &c.; £90,000 in silver from Antwerp; £93,100 from New York; and £41,000 from the Peninsula. The shipments of gold have been nearly £100,000, and about £500,000 in silver has been forwarded to India and China.

On Monday Home Stocks were steady, and prices generally were well supported.—The Three per Cents Reduced marked 93½; New Three per Cents, 93½; Consols for Account, 93½; Long Annuities, 1850, 2½; India Bonds, 2s. dis. to 2s. prem.; Exchequer Bills, 5s. to 8s. prem.; Ditto Bonds, 98½. There was a slight decline in prices on Tuesday, with a very inactive market.—Bank Stock was 218; the Reduced realised 93½; the New Three per Cents, 93½; and Consols for Account, 93½. Long Annuities, 1855, 18 1-16; Exchequer Bills, 4s. to 8s. prem. Another slight fall took place in the quotations on Wednesday, owing to the unfavourable reports respecting the difficulties between Prussia and Switzerland.—The Three per Cents Reduced marked 93½, closing at 93½; the New Three per Cents, 93½; Consols, for Account, 93½; Long Annuities, 1855, 18; India Bonds, 2s. prem.; Exchequer Bills, 4s. to 8s. prem.; Do. Bonds, 98½. On Thursday Home Stocks were firm, and prices steadily improved.—The Three per Cents Consols opened at 93½, and closed at 93½, after having been done at 91; the Reduced were 93½; the New Three per Cents, 93½; Exchequer Bills, 3s. to 7s.; India Bonds, 1s. dis. to 2s. prem.; Exchequer Bonds, 98½; Bank Stock, 217½.

We have very few changes to notice in the value of Foreign Securities, in which only a moderate business has been transacted. Brazilian Five per Cents, Small, have marked 101; Ecuador Provisional Land Warrants, 33; Greek Bonds, 5½; Mexican Three per Cents, 21½; Sardinian Five per Cents, 88½; Spanish Three per Cents, 42½; Ditto New Deferred, 21½; Ditto, Committee's Certificate of Coupon, not funded, 6 per cent; Turkish Six per Cents, 95; Turkish Four per Cents, 102½; Dutch Two-and-a-half per Cents, 65½; Dutch Four per Cents, 97½; Danish Three per Cents, 82; Granada New Active Two-and-a-quarter per Cents, 21½; Guatemala Five per Cents, 58; Peruvian Four-and-a-half per Cents, 77; Russian Four-and-a-half per Cents, 96; French Four-and-a-half per Cents, 91½; Belgian Four-and-a-half per Cents, 96; Chilean Six per Cents, 103; Danish Five per Cents, 103.

Our Continental advances state that the demand for money has rather improved. At Hamburg it is worth 5½ to 6 per cent. The French Funds have further declined this week, and the Paris Bourse has been heavy. It is supposed that the issue of between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 fresh obligations by the Strasburg and Western of France Railways has had considerable influence upon the operators.

About £200,000 in gold has been taken from the Bank of England this week for export to France and Germany.

We have to announce the failure of the bank of Messrs. Farley and Co., bankers, of Kidderminster. The amount of the liabilities is trifling, the authorised issue of notes being £14,399.

Joint-Stock Bank Shares have been tolerably firm, as follows:—British North American have realised 69½; Commercial of London, 27½; English, Scottish, and Australian Chartered, 17½; Ottoman, 14; Union of Australia, 67½; Ditto, New, 8; Western Bank of London, 41½. A favourable report of the Commercial Bank of London has been presented to the shareholders this week. Mr. Taylor has been elected a director in the room of Mr. Oxenford.

Very few transactions have been quoted in Miscellaneous Securities. Prices, however, have been tolerably firm. Australian Agricultural have realised 25; Canada Company's Bonds, 120; Ditto Government 3s. per Cents, 113½; Electric Telegraph, 99; London Omnibus Company, 34; National Discount Company, 6; Ditto, New, 14; Peninsular and Oriental Steam, 69½ ex div.; Royal Mail Steam, 67½; Berlin Waterworks, 43; Grand Junction, 75; Kent, 81; Lambeth, 95; West Middlesex, 101; Ditto, 2½ prem.; Victoria Dock, 19½.

We have had a very moderate business doing in the Railway Share Market, and prices have shown a tendency to give way. The following are the official closing prices on Thursday:—

ORDINARY SHARES AND STOCKS.—Ambergate, Nottingham, and Boston, 4½; Bristol and Exeter, 93; Caledonian, 63; Chester and Holyhead, 37½; Eastern Counties, 99; East Lancashire, 89½; Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee, 36½; Great Northern, 89½; Ditto, A Stock, 71½; Ditto, B, 121; Great Western, 69½; Lancashire and Yorkshire, 97½; London and Blackwall, 67; London and Brighton, 113; London and North-Western,

106½; Ditto Fifth, 20½; London and South Western, 107½; Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire, 34½; Midland, 82½; North British, 40½; North-Eastern—Berwick, 83½; South-Eastern, 74; South Wales, 81.

LINES LEASED AT FIXED RENTALS.—Hull and Selby, 109; Midland Bradford, 92½.

PREFERENCE SHARES.—Chester and Holyhead, 112½; Eastern Counties New Six per Cent Stock, 12; Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee, 76½; Great Northern, 117; Midland Consolidated (Leicester and Hitchin), 89½; Norfolk Debentures, 83; North-Eastern—York, 94; South-Eastern, 23½.

COLONIAL.—Buffalo and Lake Huron, 103; Ceylon, A Shares, 13; Ditto B, 21; East Indian, 115; Ditto, C Shares, 12; Grand Truck of Canada, 12 ex bonds; Great Indian Peninsula, 21½; Ditto New, 5½; Great Western of Canada, 21½; Ditto New, 10½; Madras, Third Extension, 6.

FOREIGN.—Dutch Rhenish, 12½; Eastern of France, 32½; Great Central of France, 22½; Great Luxembourg, 5½; Lombardo-Venetian, 12½; Namur and Liège, 7½; Northern of France, 33; Paris and Lyons, 55½; Royal Swedish, 14; Wiesbaden, 4½.

Mining Shares have been steady. On Thursday Coates and Culaba were done at 3½; Linares, 8½; and Sotridge Mining Company, 1½.

THE MARKETS.

CORN-EXCHANGE, Dec. 15.—The supply of English wheat on sale to-day was by no means extensive, but several of last week's usual samples were in the market. The trade was in a depressed state, and, in the few transactions reported, prices gave way 2s. to 3s. per quarter. We were well supplied with foreign wheat, in which very little business was transacted, on rather small terms. Foreign crops of grain, however, sold on former terms. The show of barley was very moderate, and most kinds moved off steadily, at full quotations. In the value of malt no change took place. Good sound oats commanded previous rates; but low and damp parcels were neglected. Beans and grey peas were unaltered in value; but white peas gave way 2s. per quarter. The flour trade was dull, and the current had a downward tendency.

Dec. 17.—The trade generally dealt heavy to-day. In prices, however, very little change took place compared with Monday.

English.—Wheat, Essex and Kent, red, 53s. to 67s.; ditto, white, 54s. to 73s.; Norfolk and Suffolk, red, 52s. to 67s.; rye, 38s. to 42s.; grinding barley, 31s. to 33s.; distilling ditto, 27s. to 33s.; mulling ditto, 35s. to 45s.; Lincoln and Norfolk malt, 67s. to 77s.; brown ditto, 68s. to 61s.; Kingston and Ware, 68s. to 78s.; Chevalier, 77s. to 79s.; Yorkshire and Lincolnshire feed oats, 21s. to 35s.; potato ditto, 23s. to 32s.; Youghal and Cork, black, 19s. to 21s.; ditto, white, 21s. to 26s.; tick beans, 34s. to 35s.; grey peas, 38s. to 40s.; maple, 40s. to 41s.; white, 40s. to 42s.; boilers, 40s. to 43s. per quarter. Town-made flour, 58s. to 60s.; Suffolk, 42s. to 43s.; Essex and Kent, 41s. to 46s. per 280 lbs. American flour, 30s. to 38s. per barrel.

Seed.—Linsed is dull, and the turn easier. Clover and canary are held at high rates. In other seeds only a moderate business is doing. Cakes are steady.

Linsed, English sowing, 68s. to 70s.; Mediterranean, 62s. to 63s.; hempeed, 42s. to 46s. per quarter. Coriander, 22s. to 24s. per cwt. Brown mustard seed, 21s. to 22s.; ditto, white, 10s. to 12s.; tares, 5s. 6d. to 6s. per bushel. English rapeseed, 80s. to 84s. per quarter. Linseed cakes, English, £10 10s. to £11 0s.; ditto, foreign, £10 0s. to £11 10s.; rapeseed cakes, £5 3s. to £5 15s. per ton.

Bread.—The prices of wheaten bread in the metropolis are from 9d. to 9½d.; of household ditto, 7½d. to 8½d. per 4lb. loaf.

Imperial Weekly Averages.—Wheat, 60s. 1d.; barley, 43s. 1d.; oats, 23s. 5d.; rye, 42s. 1d.; beans, 43s. 7d.; peas, 41s. 10d.

The Six Weekly Averages.—Wheat, 62s. 8d.; barley, 45s. 1d.; oats, 25s. 3d.; rye, 40s. 11d.; beans, 45d.; peas, 43d.

English Grain sold last week.—Wheat, 107,808; barley, 102,467; oats, 20,911; rye, 44; beans, 6303; peas, 3642 quarters.

Tea.—There is a steady demand for all kinds, and common sound congou has realised 9½d. to 9d. per lb. The public sales held this week have gone off steadily, and Assam qualities have changed hands at high rates.

Sugar.—We have much less activity in the demand for raw sugars, and in some instances prices have ruled slightly in favour of buyers, viz.—from 6d. to 1s. per cwt. Barbadoes has realised 5½ d. to 5½s.; Mauritius, 47s. 6d. to 53s.; Bengul, 50s. to 51s.; Madras, 42s. to 47s.; Penang, 49s. 6d. to 51s. 6d. per cwt. Refined goods are steady, at from 62s. to 61s. for fair to fine grocery.

Coffee.—The demand for this article has continued steady, at full prices. Good ord. native Ceylon has realised 5½s. 6d. to 53s. per cwt.

Rice.—The stock is very large, yet a full average business is doing in most kinds, on former terms.

Provisions.—Irish butter has changed hands to a fair extent, on former terms. Fine foreign qualities are brisk, and dearer. In the value of English very little change has taken place. Bacon continues dull, and prices are rather easier. Other provisions move off slowly.

Tallow.—The stock is very small for the time of year, and the demand is steady. F.Y.C., on the spot, 58s. per cwt. Tallow is worth 54s. 6d. net cash.

Oils.—Linsed oil, on the spot, has changed hands, at 38s. per cwt. Spermin oil, at £90 to £92 per ton. In other oils only a moderate business is doing. Turpentine is very brisk.

English spirits, 41s. to 43s.; American, 42s. 6d. to 41s.; and rough, 12s. per cwt.

Spirits.—Rum moves off briskly. Proof Licuwards, 41s. to 42s.; East India, 2s. 3½d. per gallon. There is a good demand for brandy, and the finest parcels are worth 12s. to 12s. 2d. per gallon. Malt spirit, 11s. proof.

Hay and Straw.—Meadow hay, £2 10s. to £4 4s.; clover ditto, £3 10s. to £5 5s.; and straw, £1 2s. to £1 9s. per load.

Coals.—Tanfield Moor, 15s. 9d.; Wylam, 17s. 6d.; Eden, 17s. 9d.; Haswell, 19s. 3d.; Lambton, 18s. 6d.; Newbottle, 18s.; Seaton, 17s. 6d.; Cawley, 17s. 9d. per ton.

Hops.—Fine new qualities continue in steady request, at full prices. Inferior parcels are less active, but not cheaper.

Wool.—Our market generally is firm, and the quotations are well supported.

Potatoes.—The supplies are moderate, and the demand is steady, at from 80s. to 120s. per ton.

Metropolitan Cattle Market.—The great market has been held this week, and the show of beasts has been very extensive. The trade has ruled firm generally, as follows:—

Beef, from 3s. 4d. to 5s. 0d.; mutton, 3s. 10d. to 5s. 4d.; veal, 3s. 10d. to 5s. 6d.; pork, 3s. 8d. to 5s. 2d. per 8 lb., to sink the offal.

Neutrage and Leadenhall.—The supplies of meat have been moderate, and the trade has ruled rather higher than in former terms.

Beef, from 3s. 0d. to 4s. 6d.; mutton, 3s. 6d. to 4s. 8d.; veal, 3s. 10d. to 5s. 0d.; pork, 3s. 8d. to 5s. 4d. per 8 lb., by the carcase.

ROBERT HERBERT.

THE LONDON GAZETTE.

FRIDAY, DEC. 12.

WAR DEPARTMENT, DEC. 12.

3rd Dragon Guards: Troop Serg-Major W. Don to be Cornet, Cornet W. Don to be Adjutant.
7th Lieut. M. Detmar to be Captain; W. Chaine to be Cornet.
1st Foot: Capt. H. S. Bawtree to be Captain.
4th Lieut. J. W. Laurie to be Instructor of Musketry.
7th Cadet W. J. Frampton to be Ensign.
19th Ensign W. H. Moffatt to be Lieutenant; A. W. Burton to be Ensign.
20th Ensign E. Kempton to be Lieutenant.
29th Ensign K. V. Bacon to be Ensign.
3rd Cadet, C. J. Ingham to be Captain; Cadet A. F. Kelsey to be Ensign.
42nd K. V. Bacon and Cadet G. T. C. Moore to be Ensigns.
44th Lieut. J. Logan to be Captain.

DETACHED BATTALION.—Lieut.-Col. C. R. Egerton to be Lieutenant-Colonel; Paymaster J. P. Hall to be Paymaster.

ASSISTANT STAFF.—Asst. Surg. D. A. Reid, M.D., to be Assistant Surgeon; Acting Assistant Surgeon H. Rowe has ceased to do duty, there being no longer occasion for his services.

BREVET.—Lieut.-Col. D. E. Mackirdy to be Colonel in the Army.

W. E. RUCK, Tooley-street, and Duke's-court, Tooley-street, Southwark, wholesale householder and provision merchant.

BANKRUPTCY.

A. C. AYRES, Ramsgate, surgeon and apothecary.—C. PEARSON, Park-street, Southampton-street, Camberwell, and Lime-street, City, and Liverpool, merchants.—F. T. HUNT, Watling-street, warehouseman.—J. BOWDEN, Victoria-grove, Brompton, and Pulteney-row, Islington, brewer and licensed vintner.—H. MOPSEY, late of Mito End-road, Ironmonger, now of Castle-street, Falmouth-square, City.—K. Y. BARNES, City-road, Middlesex, floorcloth manufacturer.—J. PARK, Wolverhampton, woollen draper.—M. KIRKUP, Jarrold, Durham, brick manufacturer.—G. MOUNTFORD, Worcester, grocer and provision dealer.—B. RICHARDS, Newport, Monmouthshire, sail maker.—S. G. KID, Kingston-upon-Hull, sea-cruiser.—J. BALE, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, builder.—W. F. ROBERTS, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, apothecary and surgeon.

TUESDAY, DEC. 16.

WAR DEPARTMENT, DECEMBER 16.

12th Light Dragoons: Maj.-Gen. Sir L. B. Leavelle to be Colonel.
74th Foot: Lieut.-Gen. C. A. Shaws to be Colonel.

ADMIRALTY, DECEMBER 11.

BREVET.—Royal Marines: Capt. J. T. Aslett to be Major.
Dec. 12.—Royal Marines: First Lieut. G. H. Hleasty to be Captain; Second Lieut. J. F. Crease to be First Lieutenant.

BANKRUPTCY.

H. CHRISTIAN, Mining-lane, City, coffee merchant.—M. R. SYERS, J. WALKER, and D. B. SYERS, Bell-alley, Lombard-street, City, and Liverpool, merchants.—W. E. HEATHFIELD and W. ABURROW, Princes-square, Finsbury, manufacturing chemists.—R. Y. BARNES, City-road, Middlesex, floorcloth manufacturer.—A. JACOBS, J. JACOBS, and H. JACOBS, Crown-street, Finsbury, merchants.—R. GRIFFITHS the Elder, and R. GRIFFITHS the Younger, Hatton-wall, Middlesex, and St. James's-walk, Clerkenwell, brassfounders and tool warehousemen.—HARVEY ROSE, Lynn, Norfolk, milliner.—S. GIFFORD, Mary-lane, City, sailcloth and canvas merchant.—C. H. DAVIS, New-croft-road, Deptford, builder.—J. LOADER, Walworth-place, Walworth, upholsterer.—T. CULLEN, Aston Manor, Juxta Birmingham, victualler and builder.—J. JONES, Aberystwith, Cardigan, draper.—T. F. SLATER, Bradford, grocer.—W. FRASER, Leeds, cabinetmaker and upholsterer.—R. WILLIAMS, Liverpool, tailor, draper, and licensed victualler.—J. LEEHING, the younger, Hartlepool, Durham, whitesmith and ironmonger.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATIONS.

W. SIMPSON, Perth, plasterer and potato and provision merchant.—D. S. COLLINS, Perth, clothier.—H. WATSON, Campbellton, upholsterer.—A. BANNATYNE, Glasgow, merchant.

BIRTH.

On the 14th inst., at the Grove, Hanwell, the wife of John H. Buchan, Esq., of a son.
On the 11th inst., at 14, Ladbrooke Villas, Notting-hill, Mrs. William Duffield, of a daughter.
On the 17th inst., at 1, Highbury-park, the wife of James Dewar, Esq., of a son.

MARRIAGES.

On the 11th inst., at St. Pancras Church, Mr. D. J. Brown, of Adelaide-road, Haverstock-hill, to Miss M. A. Stanley, of Queen's-road, West, Regent's-park.
On the 16th inst., at St. Saviour's Church, Upper Chelsea, by the Rev. E. R. de Lavanne, M. Colonel Frederick Holt Hobs, C.B., only surviving son of the late Colonel Sir William Rober, K.C.B., K.C.M., and K.T.S., to Louisa Georgiana, youngest daughter of the late John Mathias, Esq., of the Hon. East India Company's House Service.

DEATHS.

On Thursday, 11th instant, Theodore Augustus Corbin, Esq., of La Porte, in the island of Guernsey, and formerly one of the Assistant Commissioners for the Tenasserim provinces, aged 56.
On the 5th inst., at Newent-on-Tyne, James Graham Landells, relict of the late Ebenezer Landells, and last surviving daughter of the Rev. William Graham.
On the 27th of November, 1856, in the 38th year of her age, Elizabeth Ann Lunn, the beloved wife of Alexander Esq., relict of the late Esq., of Ilford Bay, Kent.
On the 16th inst., at her residence, in Gay-street, Bath, aged 83, Martha, relict of George Mogg, Esq., of the Manor House, Farrington Gurney, Somerset.
On the 15th inst., at Champion-grove, Camberley, in her 31th year, Sarah, youngest daughter of the late Robert Garland, Esq.

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WHOM HAVE WE HERE?

Song for Christmas.

WRITTEN BY JOHN OXENFORD.—COMPOSED BY G. A. MACFARREN

Molto vivace assai.

Whom have we here?

ff

Give him a place; Kind is his face, Jo-cund and free: Wrin-kles ap-pear On his broad cheek;

sf

Yet nei-ther weak Nor churl-ish is he. How is he crown'd? That di-a-dem, Me-tal or gem

sf p

Ne-ver can be. No! he has bound Ber-ries all red Round his old head: Like a re-vel-ler is he!

f

What is his name? Christmas the old! Christmas the bold! Wel-come him we! Sure 'twere a shame,

f p

Sure 'twere a shame E'er to shut out Christmas the stout! Wel-come, right wel-come, wel-come is

ff colla voce

cre - - - seen - - - do

he. Whom have we here?

ff a tempo

Give him a place; Kind is his face, Jo-cund and free: Wrin-kles ap-pear On his broad cheek;

sf

Yet nei-ther weak Nor churl-ish is he. What does he bear? Is't not a load, Swell-ing and broad,

sf p

Port-ly to see? Fly a-way care! Sure 'tis a bowl, Cheer-ing the soul: A brave to-per is he!

f

What is his name? Christmas the old! Christmas the bold! Wel-come him we! Sure 'twere a shame,

f p

Sure 'twere a shame E'er to shut out Christmas the stout! Wel-come, right wel-come, welcome is he.

ff colla voce

cre - - - seen - - - do

ff a tempo

CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

No. 836.]

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1856.

[VOL. XXIX.]

THE OLD BELL-RINGER'S STORY.



HERE are few persons whose sympathies are untouched by the sound of church bells; and no wonder when we consider the share they have in human joys and sorrows. I can say nothing about church bells that has not been better said by others; and shall therefore content me by telling a story I heard in a belfry on a Christmas-eve, many years ago. The

church yard of P— abutted on my grandfather's garden, and it

was the old gentleman's custom on village festivals to send to the ringers certain jorums of harvest beer, as it was called, and which never failed to set more clappers than those of the bells in motion. The belfry itself was a counterpart of the one depicted below; and the ringers were not unlike the group now occupied in ringing in our Christmas number. I was a privileged person in virtue of my grandfather's stingo, and have more than once been allowed to call out the changes of the peal, the numbers being chalked on the belfry door. One Christmas-eve the ale had been freely distributed, and the old church tower had been kept in a continual state of tremulousness by the clanging of the bells, until the hour of midnight had passed, and the last peal had been rung. The weary ringers sat in a group to finish their ale-pitcher, and their conversation naturally reverted to Christmas-eves of the past.

"I could tell you an odd tale, if I liked, that happened when the oldest here was only a boy," said John Travers, a man reputed to be more than eighty years old. Of course, all were eager to hear the story, and I have endeavoured to recall it in the following narrative:

John Travers, or Jack Travers, as he was called, was a noted ringer in his day, and in the habit of visiting the neighbouring

villages to ring a change or two, for the sake of good fellowship. On a certain Christmas-eve, as he said, "long, long ago," John had gone to Fishertoft, a small but thriving place on the Kentish coast, to ring in Christmas-day. When the labour he delighted in was finished, a storm of unusual violence came on, and made a return to his own home a matter not to be thought of. More than one of his companions offered him a bed; but John was either pot-valiant or obstinate, and nothing would do but he must pass the night in the belfry. As it was no use disputing with a man in his state of mind, he was allowed to have his way, and almost before the departure of his companions, Jack Travers was fast asleep on the settle. How long he slept he did not know; but when he awoke, he was very cold and thirsty. The storm had ceased, and the new moon was occasionally visible amid the drifting clouds. Jack could see this through the belfry window; and it occurred to him that the best thing he could do was to go home. With this intention he stumbled down the stairs, but found the church doors fastened, and himself a prisoner. What was to be done? He was too cold to go to sleep, so he resolved to walk about the church till his friend should release him in the morning. There is a large



BELL-RINGING. DRAWN BY C. KEENE.

monument to Sir Robert Blunderthorpe in Fishertoft Church—one of those ponderous masses of marble that might be better applied to the repair of the building than to its disfigurement.

Jack Travers was not a very superstitious man; but he confessed to feeling a little uncomfortable as he stood before the effigy of Sir Robert, and watched its features brighten with the moonlight, and then grow dark again, as the clouds drifted along. As he stood gazing at the monument, a streak of very bright light came from it, and, for a moment, dazzled his eyes. He looked again; and there stood before him what he thought was the ghost of Sir Robert, with his face glowing like a fiery furnace. John owned that he was warm enough then.

"Jack Travers," said the apparition, "what the d—l are you doing here?"

John thought for a ghost, and a gentleman's ghost into the bargain, that he was very familiar, and so he answered rather boldly:

"I've been ringing in Christmas-day, and been asleep in the belfry, and now I'm trying to get warm."

"It strikes me, Jack," said the appearance, "that you'll get much warmer in a few minutes than ever you were before in your life!" and he directed his glowing face, that shone like the bull's eye of a dark lantern, full upon John's eyes, and nearly blinded him.

"I hope you won't do me any harm, Sir Robert," said Jack, "I have a great liking for spirits, I assure you;" beginning to regain courage.

"If I thought," said the spectre, "that you didn't mean fairly by me, I'd lug you into the monument and brick you up till doomsday."

"But I do mean fairly," answered Jack, "his courage quite come back to him; "only try me."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the apparition. "I always thought you one of the right sort, so I will try you—come with me, Jack."

Jack Travers, without a moment's hesitation, followed the figure into Sir Robert's capacious monument, and was introduced to two other ghosts, both females, and no doubt intimate friends of the proprietor of the mausoleum. If Jack had heard of the witches' Sabbath he would no doubt have concluded that they were now keeping their Christmas-day, for in one corner of the extensive family vault of the Blunderthorpes, they had piled all that was mortal of Sir Robert and Dorothea his wife, and as the next heir had got rid of his patrimony at a game of shovel-board in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the vault had never been further occupied. Over a small lamp, which burned with a blue flame, was suspended a small pot, filled no doubt, Jack thought, with hell-broth, thick and slab, and which one of the goblins watched with great attention. The other was preparing some devil's mess, but of what composed Jack could not discover. The goblin who had tended the pot at last declared her work was ready, and then handed it to the first apparition. Jack was shocked to hear his spectral host declare with a tremendous oath, that the preparation was excellent, and was somewhat perplexed when requested to drink from the steaming vessel. However, as Jack had never met with a beverage that he was afraid of (physic excepted), he took as much as he could of the ghost's drink. It was very hot and very potent, but the ladies (no doubt being sublimated essences) drank deeply and without winking.

How long this fearful orgie continued, Jack professed not to remember; but dearly did he pay for his unholly revel. About five o'clock on that Christmas morning, the people of Fishertoft were roused from their slumbers by the ringing of the tenor bell; and fears were entertained, that either the church or the parsonage was on fire, or that the Pretender and the Pope had seized the throne and constitution. The bell kept ringing; and, as soon as the male population could put on its small-clothes, a rush was made to the church, and up into the belfry. There was Jack Travers pulling away; pulling away; but evidently unconscious of what he was doing, and utterly deaf to all inquiries as to what he meant by it. At last, he missed his "sally;" and, the bell swinging over, wound the rope round the wheel, fortunately not taking Jack up with it. What had come to the man? He was evidently possessed, or drunk; but those who had parted from him at midnight, were ready to make oath, that they had not left a drop of ale in the pitcher, and everybody believed them. Jack was borne off to the "Red Lion," and put to bed; and a very wretched Christmas-day he passed, poor fellow; drinking small beer by the quart, and actually refusing the wing of a turkey. As soon as he was better, Jack underwent an amount of cross-examination that was perfectly marvellous, but no clue could be gained to the mystery; until some years afterwards, when one Dick Luzzger was hung for shooting a custom-house officer that went to take him into custody. Jack then made a confidant of the parish-clerk of Fishertoft, telling him his adventure in the church, and what he believed he saw in the monument; and it was considered at the time as a singular circumstance, that neither Jack nor the clerk were sober for a month afterwards.

The church was repaired at a later date, and the great monument disturbed. Lo! a wonderful metamorphosis had taken place. The bones of Sir Robert Blunderthorpe, and of Dorothea his wife, were found to have been changed into spirit-tubs!

And so ends the tale I heard in a belfry.

M. L.

A SEASONABLE SONG.

BY A CONTEMPLATIVE COCKNEY

HAIL, Winter, hail! thy snowy reign
Makes man put on thick boots again:
Thy frosts each walker-out dispose
To let his hands and feet blow his nose.

The cabmen now desert the street,
And in sequester'd "n' lie" meet;
Their horses, standing ill at ease,
Small wags might call *chevaux de freeze*.

Now Youth stout beads' chase derides,
And on the pavement strikes up slides;
While Age, that cannot walk in peace,
Vainly ejaculates "Police!"

Now, by the side of steaming can,
Shivers the baked-potato man;
A cruel fate seems in his lot—
To shake with cold, yet cry "All hot!"

From shelving housetops now the snow
Falls without warning "Heads below!"
And hats thereby than pancake flatter
Provoke the question "Who's your hatter?"

In every street such sights as these
In winter time the cockney sees;
And while the streets intent he watches,
From standing still a cold he catches.

If a miller goes to put his flour bags in order, why does he necessarily pay a visit to a distinguished military commander?
Because he goes to Marshal Saxe (Martial sacks).
If an auricula could speak, what Popish practice would it mention?
Auricular confession.

ACROSTIC CHARADES.

"Lysander riddles very prettily!"
Midsummer Night's Dream, Act II. Sc. 3.



lesques, may have been reduced from one Stage to another, and even have been brought to beg a laugh at a Circus,—even these miserable ones are not driven away in their tatters, but, when introduced to the Christmas guests, are received with that spirit of good-will which is the very soul of the Christmas season, and with that indulgent kindness which is undoubtedly the largesse that we should bestow upon them in return for their endeavours to win our smiles and to provide us with harmless amusement.

In how many homes will this sort of innocent recreation be indulged in during the present season! It will find its place in quiet family circles, where the little children gather together at their games; in the old English farm-houses, where the ruddy fire lights up a century of comforts; as well as in stately mansions, where, in the

"Tudor-chimney'd bulk
Of mellow brickwork,"

there is an ancient hall, with a real yule-log blazing on the spacious hearth, and, around it, a goodly gathering of men and maids. There, perhaps, when that particular time of the evening shall have come, as it came

"At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve,"

and is told by Tennyson with unctuous brevity—

"The game of forfeits done—the girls all kiss'd
Beneath the sacred bush,"—

the assembled company may, over their wassail-bowl, start a conversation similar to that which passed between Mr. Francis Allen, "the parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall," and Mr. Tennyson, who

"held a talk,
How all the old honour had from Christmas gone,
Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
In some odd nooks like this;"

and—having perhaps acted a Charade at an earlier part of the evening—they may now, as they sit there talking round the fire, and unable to bestow upon Christmas those olden "honours" so deplored by the quartet of epic-loving friends at Francis Allen's, these modern Christmas-keeping men and maids may possibly fall back upon "odd games," even to the asking of Riddles and Charades. In which sport we trust that we may be permitted to join them, bringing, as our portion of the entertainment, a few ACROSTIC CHARADES.

We introduced these novelties in the "ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS" for August 30th, where the principle of their construction was duly explained.

We will, however, briefly repeat our formula.

Select two or more words, independent of each other as to verbal connection, but having a mutual relation in their allusion or signification. The connection may be that between a general and his victory; an author and his work; an inventor and his invention; a spot and its celebrity; or any other similarly legitimate connection, provided that the word, or words, chosen on either side, contain the same number of letters. Two acrostics are formed by the selected pair of words—such as LONDON, THAMES—NAPOLEON, WATERLOO—SOUTARI HOSPITAL, MISS NIGHTINGALE—CHARLES DICKENS, PICKWICK PAPERS; and their letters, taken in due order, are to form the first and last letters of certain words to be guessed; until the several letters of the Acrostics are gone through, when the two Acrostic words are themselves to be enigmatically described. For example, in the Acrostic-Charade of LONDON-THAMES, the first letters of the two words being L and T we require a word commencing and terminating with those letters. We select "LIGHT," which we describe thus. "Untar'd I brighten the poor man's home." Our next letters being O and H we select the word "OSTRICH," and say of it (for the lines may be perfectly independent of each other), "My wings wave over the beauty's brow." And so on, through the six "LETTERS;" and we then briefly give a description of "THE WORDS."

That these explanations were understood, and that the Acrostic-Charades were welcomed by many, was fully proved by the mass of communications which we received on the subject. The Charades were continued in the numbers of the "ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS" for September 13th and 27th, which induced many correspondents to compose similar ones for the amusement of their own immediate circles. From those that have been forwarded to us we now select the following, as an aid to the Christmas entertainment of our readers.

CUTHBERT BEDE, B.A.

No. I.—THE LETTERS. (12)

I oft decide a Nation's fate;
My fame for learning has been great;
Some people think me very dear;
Though much too fanciful, I fear.
But, take a pinch; and, if you sneeze,
I'll keep you warm, lest you should freeze.
Of Mohair, airless, I am found,
With marbles lately underground.
A secret work when all is gone;
A draught you'd better let alone.
A woman's scream, or painful wailing;
A pleasure-best to go out sailing.

THE WORDS.

I blessings brought, and bring again;
Peace on the Earth, good-will to men.—
I've Characters in scores to fill;
I'm duodecimal, and What you Will.

J. G. B.

No. II.—THE LETTERS. (5)

In eastern climes I cage the fair;
To me, the Negro bends in prayer;
I often am a bumping toast;
In Rome, forbidding wholesome roast.
A horrid shout, the ear appalling;
The mass of waters raised, or falling;
I cause disturbance, lusty bawling;
And answer from a distant part,
To speak the language of the heart.

THE WORDS.

The snow has fallen far and near,
And ice-bound lies the limpid mere;
But still my hardy first is seen,
In radiant garb of red and green;
To cheer the shiv'ring traveller's sight,
Or deck the festive hall at night.
There, when the song and dance are high,
Still higher you my next may spy;
And artful are the means essay'd
To lure 'neath it the winsome maid.
A laugh—a blush—I sanction all,
From my proud station in the hall.

J. G. B.

No. III.—THE LETTERS. (5)

I HELP to gird a city round;
I gave the Planets laws;
My lion, aye, was faithful found;
My brother Israelite was bound,
Despite my teeth and claws.

THE WORDS.

My first is as hard as my second is soft,
And one in the other we carry aloft.

F. B. F.

No. IV.—THE LETTERS. (9)

CALM and resign'd the Martyr met his fate!
That fight, Massena, raised thy name in story!
In the White Sea a Russian Cape I date,
Whilst I am held Adelphi's brightest glory.
Where I am not, sweet Peace can never dwell,
While deep within my gloom the Prisoner pineth.
Self-poison'd Queen! our ancient name thou'lt tell:
Sweet Song's fair Bard, how bright thy fame-star shineth
While, Mother of us all, she saw, she heard, she fell.

THE WORDS.

Weary, foot-sore, thirsting, panting, faint,
The traveller views the limpid river glide,
On its fair bosom sees no marring taint,
Sees not the death its treacherous waters hide.
Boldly he revels mid th' alluring flood;
But, ah! what monster leaves his secret lair?
That pure fair water has a tinge of blood,
And joy's low accents swell to loud despair.

J. R. W. L.

No. V.—THE LETTERS. (7)

FROM Poet's pen I'm oft admired;
I'm by the Queen of Oude required;
A dignity to men I give;
By me, of late, men cease to live;
I'm written as a bridal lay;
Paupers are in me every day,
And would eat my fruit without delay.

THE WORDS.

A genius famed, now passed away:
What made her famous in her day.

H. C.

No. VI.—THE LETTERS. (6)

THE children's play I oft adorn;
A fabled beast deprived of corn;
A friend that's cut when most in need;
I live in books, yet cannot read;
I never dwell in men of sense;
But serve as England's best defence.

THE WORDS.

Through the heart of a city a fine river flows;
Guess both, and my meaning I'll quickly disclose.

E. T. B.

No. VII.—THE LETTERS. (4)

THE mainspring of the world am I;
And for my food I turn and tumble.
Look in the streets! I'm passing by!
Soprano's shriek, or Basso's grumble.

THE WORDS.

In Sicily my first oft rolls
Adown my second,—waking wonder,
If there th' advent'rous tourist strolls—
With lightning haste, and noise of thunder.

J. G. B.

No. VIII.—THE LETTERS. (6)

I TURN my back upon light-hearted mirth;
Mine was the blood first shed on the earth;
An old Norman warrior with broadsword so keen;
In the fields on a morning I'm oft to be seen;
I am the object of each man's desire;
Of me Homer sang to his high-sounding lyre.

THE WORDS.

In my first, you my second may often espy;
Sweet to the smell, and bright to the eye.

ANON.

No. IX. THE LETTERS. (5)

HERMIONE was sad, when torn from one;
In Lapland's icy clime, I'm found, a treasure;
I'm eaten 'neath Italia's sultry sun;
Reversed I'm sold in pot-houses by measure;
In me the truant schoolboy takes no pleasure.

THE WORDS.

Seven cities claim'd his birth,—not one alone,—
Whose poem Phœbus challenged as his own.

CASTLE HEDDINGHAM.

(Answers from Correspondents are solicited.)

THE FAIRY OF THE YULE LOG.

HALL I tell you a story? Well, listen. Some years ago, not more than you could count, there dwelt in a little cottage on the seashore an old man and woman, and their little grandson, Christopher. It was an old tumble-down place, that seemed almost to shiver as the cold sea-breeze swept past it, making the badly-fastened door and windows to rattle and shake, and the tiles to come chasing one another down the small, low roof, and driving the smoke again through the wide chimney into the little room, whose walls it had already almost blackened. Could you have been there on some

stormy night when the winds were howling, and the waves tossing up and down, when all was dark, save when the lightning flashed redly along the sky, you would, indeed, have thought it cheerless; for bad as was the outside, within it was no better; here and there, where some tile had been driven off the roof, down came the rain, pitter, patter, drip, drip; while bit after bit would crumble away, from the white-washed wall. The chairs all looked rickety; the tottering table was propped up by sticks; and the rushlight burned dimly and flickeringly, as the gusty wind swept coldly through the creviced window and tattered curtain.

But my tale is not of such a night. It was the evening of Christmas Day. In place of the dim rushlight, there was a Yule-log that burned cheerily, casting its fantastic shadows on the old oak-chest and the polished table; and right merrily danced the shadows among the holly and mistletoe that was placed fancifully between the willow-pattern plates, and the blue and brown cups and basins ranged against the wall.

For they had a Yule-log! "It looked Christmas-like," the old man said. And of this Yule-log is my story. It scarcely deserved to be called a log, so small had it become; not that it thought itself so; for it crackled, and threw out sparks, and tried to look as grand as it had been three Christmas-days before this.

Three years ago there had been a terrible Christmas Eve. In the dark night-time a noble ship had been driven upon the rocks, and had been dashed to pieces. On the wintry morrow of the Christmas Day, the old man had found a great piece of the ship's mainmast lying upon the shore; he dragged it home, and for three winters it had lighted his Christmas-fire. And now the little family were sitting around it: the old man and woman fast asleep, and little Christopher dreamily watching the circling smoke, and the long spiral flames, that shot brightly upwards.

Before the old man and woman had dropped off to sleep, little Christopher had been reading to them out of one of the books that had been lent to him from the library of the National School. He had been at this school for more than two years, and could not only read very well, but had made great progress in other pursuits. More than one book had been given to him as a reward; and he was allowed to take home other books out of the well-stocked library belonging to the school. These he loved to ponder over during the long winter evenings, and to wonder whether he should ever see those strange countries of which he so often read. He was a little day-dreamer, was little Christopher; and, as he sat and gazed at the blazing Yule-log, in his wondering fancy the glowing embers took the forms of men and horses, of sea-tossed vessels, of dismal caves, of vast mountains: while occasionally he would gently stir the log, that he might watch the sparks fly like sky-rockets up the dark chimney.

Suddenly the log seemed to rear itself up, and leaves appeared to shoot forth from it; and it grew, and grew, and spread forth branches on all sides, until the old man and woman, and the willow-patterned plates, and the blue and brown cups and basins were hidden by it; but still on and on it went, ever increasing; through the blackened roof, and the shaly walls, until at length the very cottage disappeared, and Christopher found himself in the depths of a vast forest beneath the shade of a mighty oak. While he yet gazed wonderingly, from amidst the overhanging foliage, there appeared to him a beautiful being more fair and lovely than he had ever beheld, or imagined. She was clad in a glittering robe interwoven with gossamer threads of gold; her little slippers were of silver; on her head she wore a circlet of diamonds; and in her tiny hand she bore a slender silver wand, that shone brilliantly in the moonlight. Advancing towards the bewildered Christopher, "I am," she said, "the good spirit of the oak; to-night shalt thou behold the revels of the fairies." She waved her wand thrice over him, and thrice clapped her hands: instantly, from every tree and flower, fairies responded to her call, and bent before her, doing homage to her as their queen. The moon-beams gleamed with a white lustre through the overarching boughs; strains of soft music arose, faint as the distant echoes amid the hills; the very breeze seemed peopled with myriads of fairy-forms, some hastening to join the mazy dance, others bearing in their hands the acorn-cups filled with the honeyed dew.

Little Christopher was almost breathless with delight as he gazed on a scene so new to him; but again the fairy waved her wand; the soft strains of music became fainter and fainter; the bright fairy forms seemed gradually to float from before him until they became enthroned in a thin mist that spread itself over all around; and even the good spirit had passed away; but though he saw her not, he felt that she still lingered near him.

Little Christopher stood as before in the depths of a forest; but near to him were huge piles of stones, and a crowd stood around the oak, which was encircled with mistletoe. Some were Druids, clad in long white garments, glancing proudly around them in the consciousness of their power; others were but half-clad forms; some indeed were of martial look, though but rude in their bearing; and some there were with dull, stolid looks, who were eagerly watching for the moment when they might bear to their homes a branch of the hallowed mistletoe; for in those dark days of ignorance they thought that the mistletoe could heal their bodily pains, and drive away the evil spirits that ever hovered near them. At length the Arch-Druid ascended the tree; a golden sickle was in his hand, the sacred crown encircled his forehead, and from the lips of the assembled multitude arose the lofty strains of the idol-hymn.

As little Christopher looked wonderingly on the scene, the fairy once more stood before him and waved her wand; again all was changed. The oak had become a mighty vessel, and was sailing proudly over the waves. Borne a board of her, little Christopher saw lands where bloom the rich crimson flowers of the tropics: he inhaled the sweet perfume of the Spice Islands, and forced his way

through huge floating masses of ice; he saw, too, those wonders of the deep, the sea-fire, making the waves like to some glowing lava-stream, and shooting up bright rays of light, as the vessel glided on rapidly; the mollusc shining as floating stars upon the water, some of a brownish-red, others transparent and delicate as water-bubbles; the beautiful Physalida, sailing like a mimic vessel, with its rose-tinted crest, and long ear-like feelers; the flying-fish, and the bonitos; the dorado of brilliant yellow; while sometimes the vessel glided over shallows through waters as clear as crystal, making visible groups of coral and madrepore stone, half covered by seaweed and fungi, while shoals of variegated fish darted rapidly between them. He saw the beautiful constellations of the south, and the mighty whales spouting up jets of spray.

But the night is dark; the howling winds sound as the wail of a funeral dirge, as they drive the black clouds violently along; the sails are hastily reefed; the hurricane breaks forth; the lightning rapidly flashing, spreads momentarily a lurid light; the thunder roars unpitifully; the tempest-tossed waves break over the vessel, and threaten each moment to engulf it. Oh! is there none to save? Surely these signals must be heard. Oh, for the life-boat with its gallant crew! But on—on drives the storm unpitifully, with redoubled fury. The mainmast is gone: still, still they hope. Hope, oh, how vainly! The vessel strikes upon a rock, and is dashed to a thousand shivers; the wretched crew cling despairingly to the broken planks.

Ha! there is a crag of safety. Swim to it; it is your only chance. Battle with the fierce and foaming waves! press through them! cleave them! swim! swim! swim!

Well, strange things do happen! There stood the shaly old cottage, with its rickety chairs, and willow-pattern plates, and blue and brown cups and basins; and there was the Yule-log burning out its very last bit; and there was the old man sleeping soundly in his chair. But, the old woman was broad awake; and she was saying, "Why, Christopher, my lad! whatever have you been dreaming about? When I awoke, there were you fast asleep, and tossing your arms about, just as though you were swimming. And then, at last, you threw your arm right against the leg of this tottering old table, and down it came. I wonder it hasn't awoke your grandfather!" Little Christopher rubbed his eyes, and saw the table, the crash of whose fall had probably aroused him from his dream.

Dream, did I say? Well, it may have been a dream. But at any rate little Christopher thought that some passages in his favourite books were very like the scenes that had been shown to him by the good Fairy of the Yule-log.

H. M. B.

SYMPTOMS OF BEING A CONFIRMED OLD BACHELOR.

WHEN a man has list nailed round his doors, and the chinks of his window covered up with sand-bags, and a board put over the front of his fireplace, that's a symptom.

When a man has his night-gown and night-cap aired regularly at five minutes to ten every evening, that's a symptom.

When a man has a cruel taken up to his bedside, and cannot go to bed without hot-water bottles for his feet, that's a symptom.

When a man is seen buying buttons, that's a symptom.

When a man is in constant request to stand godfather, that's a symptom.

When a man at a certain age gives up dancing, and takes to playing whist, that's a symptom.

When a man treasures an old glove, and has a bundle of small-shaped letters tied, quite yellow with age, which he keeps in a secret drawer, and takes out once a year to ponder over, that's a symptom.

When a man complains of the noise when children laugh, and turns his head away when a lady brings him the baby to kiss, that's a symptom.

When a man gives up going to see a pantomime at Christmas, that's a symptom.

When a man cannot get up without a cup of tea, nor dress without a fire in his bed-room, that's a symptom.

When a man cannot go anywhere without his umbrella, that's a symptom.

When a man buys a French poodle, and teaches it tricks, or spends hours in whistling to a German bullfinch, or passes one half the day in pumping an accordion, or shuts himself up to read Blue-Books, every one of those amiable characteristics may be looked upon as a symptom.

When a man encases himself in fannel, and will not stir out in summer time without his goloshes, comforter, and great-coat, that's a symptom.

When a man locks up his coal-cellar as tightly as his tea-caddy, and shovels out his Wallsend with the same minute precision as his Bohemian, that's a symptom.

When a man avoids ladies' society, and prefers a cigar to the best piping a Swedish nightingale could offer him, that's a symptom.

When a man always seizes hold of the seat nearest the fire, that's a symptom.

When a man late in life gets himself appointed a Poor Law Guardian, that's a symptom.

When a man receives no invitations for Christmas Day, but dines by his miserable self, in some cheerless chop-house, that's a symptom.

When a man neither gives nor receives New Year's Gifts, nor Christmas Boxes, and shuts himself up hermitically for two or three days in his room to avoid the persecution of being dunned for them, that's also a symptom.

When a man objects to flowers in his room because they are unhealthy, votes music a bore, and thinks that the climate is getting worse and worse every year, that's a symptom.

When a man gets angry because his visitors will not wipe their feet on the door-mat, and wanders about the room dusting the furniture with his handkerchief, and sweeps his own hearth, and gathers up all the stray pins, and is annoyed if anything is a hair's-breadth out of its place, that's a symptom.

When a man has lost all taste for plum-pudding and mince-pies, and only sees impropriety in mistletoe, which he wonders any well-regulated mamma can tolerate, that's a symptom.

When a man thinks every one is cheating him, that's a symptom.

When a man does all the shopping himself, and goes to the butcher's regularly to select his own mutton-chop, that's a symptom.

When a man openly confesses he wears a wig, throws no disguise over his age, takes a profusion of snuff, and complains publicly that "his corns trouble him terribly," that's a symptom.

When a man insists upon mixing his own whisky toddy, or brewing his gin punch, in preference to a lady doing it for him, that's a symptom.

When a man makes a practice of calling every young man who differs in opinion with him an "impudent young puppy," and makes a loud outcry against the little respect that's shown now-a-days to Old Age, that's a symptom.

When a man carries cough-lozenges and dinner-pills in his pockets, and has stowed about his person a toothpick, a pin cushion, a cork-screw, nail-scissors and a packet of sticking-plaster, those are so many little symptoms.

When a man converts all his property into a life annuity, that's a symptom.

When a man calls grown-up girls "little chits" and "young minxes," insists upon having all the windows up in an omnibus, avers that there is no such beauty now as there was in his days, declares that we haven't an actor at present that's worth the trouble or expense of going to see, shakes his umbrella angrily at the little boys in the streets, growls and scowls if the servants keep him waiting longer than a minute at the door, complains of all the beef-steaks being tough, writes letters to the newspapers about the Italian boys and the price of meat, and loudly asserts, when he is the least put out, that "the world is going mad as fast as ever it can;"—these are all so many undeniable symptoms of a man being to the last second of his solitary existence a CONFIRMED OLD BACHELOR.

HORACE MATHEW.

THE CHRISTMAS DOLE,

AND THE SENTIMENTS OF MR. DUMBLE, PAROCHIAL AUTHORITY, UPON THE ENGRAVING.

(See page 626.)

I'm no judge of pictures, and I've nothing to say one way or the other about this one. There seems to be a fine large house, and a handsome entrance with columns, and coats of arms, and all that; but why the proprietor, whoever he may be, should allow the place to be disfigured with a rabble of paupers about the gates, I don't understand. They might be made to know their duty, and sneak round to the back door, not come blustering up at the gate built for their betters, I should say. But most likely they are only put there out of a bit of a whim of Mr. Dodgson's, and the owner of the real house never allowed any such liberty. I have known that sort of thing before done by painting gentlemen, who take what I consider the uncalled-for liberty of sticking beggars, and old women, and that kind of trash, into the middle of their pictures. It shows the class of people that painters must be when they see more in a bundle of coloured rags than in a decently and respectfully dressed party, with his receipts for taxes in his pocket. It would be a moral lesson, now, if they would paint him, and they might put their beggar in also, starving in a ditch, while the respectable party rebukes his improvidence and refers him to the Union. But painters have no imagination, and only copy what they see anywhere.

The picture may be good, or it may not. But one thing I know, and that is, that it ought not to have been drawn. Just look at it. There's about twenty of these paupers come together to receive this Dole, as they call it. The respected clerk to the guardians of our parish understands Latin, and says that Dole comes from some Latin word ("dole 'em, I think he called it"); that means a trick, and those that know the tricks of paupers will agree with me that there could not be a more proper name for it. There are twenty, more or less, of these vagrants. One of them only seems to me to have the least claim to be helped, and he goes on crutches, though he looks able-bodied enough, and I dare say throws away his crutches at night, when he feasts on the plunder of the day. But as for the rest, they are all well enough off, and ought to be ashamed, while they have warm clothes on their backs, to be receiving assistance from anybody. If they had sold or pawned their clothes, and were shivering with cold, it might be proper to consider their case. But these creatures have no spirit, not a bit of it.

I hope, as I said before, that the picture is only a whim of Mr. Dodgson's, and that no respectable party, proprietor of a mansion like the above, ever lowered himself to have a rabble at his gates. Christmas time least of all, because then respectable persons are in the country, and naturally pay visits to one another, where their eyes ought not to be contaminated with the spectacle of ignorant paupers. But whether it happened or not, the painting such things is an offence against good morality, and ought to be severely punished. What right, I should like to know, has Mr. Dodgson, or Mr. Anybody, to make pictures which are to keep on foot the insolent belief that paupers have a right to expect their betters to do more for them than pay the poor's-rate. If it was one of the customs of our ancestors, the sooner we forget it in this enlightened age the better. I don't desire to say anything against our ancestors, because it is my opinion that, according to their lights, they did as well as could be expected, and meant well upon all occasions, but they had naturally a great deal to learn. As to their mode of treating paupers, it was perfectly childish. They talked about the poor having a "right" to be supported, and the clerk to the guardians says that lawyers have put in books that such a right is recognised by the law. It makes one's blood boil to hear such rubbish. What? A lazy, insolent pauper, with scarce a rag to his back and a shoe to his foot, talk of rights! I should like to hear him at the door of our workhouse. I fancy he'd try how he liked a stone sheet and a mud pillow that night. That's my fancy. But our ancestors were to blame for putting such things into the heads of the paupers of their time. When once a notion like that takes root among the lower orders, there is no getting it out, their ignorance and obstinacy is so shocking.

But if we were to say, for the sake of argument (not, of course, that I'd argue with a pauper, except with this here cane), that these creatures had a right to bread and water, if they had gained a settlement, it stands the more to reason that they ought not to expect anything else. As for your Doles, and charities, and benefactions, and alms, and gifts, and all the rest of it, they are foolish blunders, which do great mischief. For my part, I believe that there is a sort of superstition at the bottom of it all, and that just as I am told in the benighted dark ages of the Pagans and Crusaders, people used to found churches to be forgiven for their wickedness, folks go giving away charity in our days, because there is something on their minds. This to my mind is weak and childish. If a man has behaved respectably, paid his way, attended to his business, saved his money, and made his will, what ought he to have upon his mind? It's only such like parties, you know, that are likely to have money to give away, and such like parties ought to know better. But whether or not, they ought not to encourage paupers in the ideas of having more out of their neighbours than the law allows, and therefore I protest against this kind of pictures.

Looking at the thing again, I perceive that the snow is on the ground. Now if a parcel of lazy beggars are to come and take relief that they are not entitled to, I should think the least they could do is to bring their brooms and shovels, and clear the path that their betters are to come along. If the painter had made them hard at work, and trying to earn a few pence in a way that would not be altogether dishonest (though they ought to be glad to work on the roads, or anywhere else, without fee or reward), the lesson might have been a pretty good one. But not they. Not one of them thinks of such a thing. Those that have got the Dole walk off with their winnings, and the others wait about, talking and laughing at impudent as if they hadn't come there on an errand for which they ought to be sent to the crank.



THE CHRISTMAS DOLE.—DRAWN BY G. DODGSON.

I observe an able-bodied pauper, just at the gate, touching his hat. I suppose he is telling his pitiful story, nine ounces of lies to one of truth, as we tell the paupers that come bothering us. I should like to know what he is saying. The relieving officer, or whatever he is, does not look as if he was cross-questioning him in the style these creatures require to be sifted, but seems to be taking it all in, and compassionating him. I dare say the vagabond applicant is stating that he has had nothing to eat that day, when, if you were to shake his jacket, you would tumble out crumbs enough from his pockets to feed a poultry-yard. And, of course, he will appeal to the other tramps, the woman and child behind him, as if they were not all in a story, and had not got their lesson up, as I always tell the magistrate when a pauper complains of our house. If that party inside the arch there were to give him the sort of questioning he would get at our place, it's my opinion that he'd save by it next year, if not this, for I am bound in justice to ourselves, though self-approbation is no praise, to say that nobody whom we have once taken in hand comes back again if he can beg, borrow, buy, or steal enough to keep

body and soul together. We do our duty to the ratepayers, I can tell you.

The only thing about the picture that I can at all approve of is, that the lower classes are made to keep their distance, and are not allowed to come up to the house to annoy their betters. This may be some superstition, too, about "feeding the poor at the gate;" but any way it puts them in their right place, and reads them a proper lesson. Yet I don't know but what it would be better to let them come near, and see the blazing fire, and the plenty of food all about, and the comfort and happiness of respectable life, because, when they went home, they would contrast it with their own poverty and scamping, and would reflect that Providence smiles upon respectability and keeping up appearances. However, on the whole, perhaps it's better to keep them away, for if you give paupers an inch they'll take an ell, and some of the women or children might insinuate themselves in at the door, under pretence of thanking the ladies or the like (not that they have any real thankfulness in them, far from it), and then they are mighty handy with their fingers, and

spoons and forks might disappear. Besides, half of them are connected with bad characters, and there is no use in showing them how you fasten your doors, and which windows are the easiest to get through. Yes, Mr. Dodgson is quite right to keep them at the gate; only he is quite wrong in bringing them at all.

If you ask my opinion, I should say that the picture had better have been let alone; but if it was to be done at all, there should have been a moral teaching and purpose about it, and it should have shown the happiness of being respectable, and the misery of being paupers. As it is, for anything that is shown to the contrary, all parties seem equally pleased; the paupers are receiving the Dole, and going off to enjoy their Christmas, and the respectable proprietor seems actually pleased also to have the opportunity of making them happy. I am told that this sort of mawkish sentiment is a good deal encouraged in country districts, and right sorry I am to hear it. Little of it you will find in our Union, I promise you, while John Bumble has a tongue in his head and a stick in his hand. And that's what I have to say about the picture.

S. B.



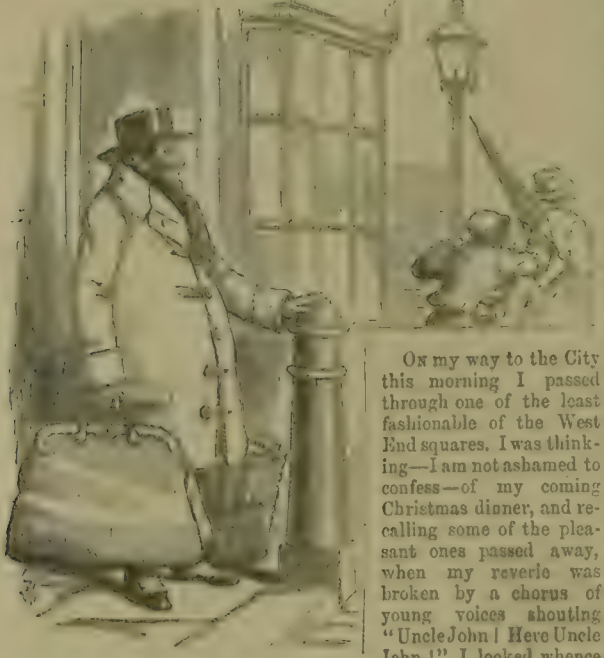
ARRIVAL OF UNCLE JOHN. DRAWN BY J. A. PASQUIER.



PACKING THE CHRISTMAS HAMPER. DRAWN BY E. DUNCAN.

THE ARRIVAL OF UNCLE JOHN.

(See page 627.)



On my way to the City this morning I passed through one of the least fashionable of the West End squares. I was thinking—I am not ashamed to confess—of my coming Christmas dinner, and recalling some of the pleasant ones passed away, when my reverie was broken by a chorus of young voices shouting “Uncle John! Here Uncle John!” I looked whence

the noise proceeded, and saw a snug good-looking old gentleman enfolded in half-a-dozen arms at least, and being stifled with kisses, whilst two or three beaming faces looked down upon him from the staircase. Even the cabman smiled and appeared incapable of overcharging the excellent old gentleman, and when jarvey mounted his box to drive away he looked kindly again at the hall-door which shut him from a fare that had evidently given him a better impression of human nature than he usually entertained.

I began to think of my Uncle John—not that he at all resembled the worthy old gentleman just deposited in — Square, except in good humour; and having a morning to spare, I have jotted down the following recollections of a Christmas visit paid to myself and wife by that very unremarkable personage.

In a little village, not a hundred miles from Yorkshire (we love to be mysterious, as befitting Christmas time)—in a little village, which we will call Brightside, resides our Uncle John, a kind well-to-do person, whose sole ambition has been to live at peace with his neighbour, and to do his duty honestly and earnestly. He had never left Brightside except to attend some neighbouring market until last Christmas, when at the continual solicitation of myself and my wife (he is her uncle by the mother's side) he made his first, and, I doubt not, his last visit to the great Metropolis.

The morning for his departure having arrived, it took some time to start him, although his luggage was only a carpet-bag (borrowed from the doctor of the village), a large umbrella, and a basket containing game, apples, and onions; but the unusual occurrence of leaving home and for such a journey as he was about to undertake made these preparations a matter of no small difficulty. First, the onions were packed with his linen in the carpet-bag, and bag and basket had to be re-opened to correct the mistake—then it was found that in the darkness of the morning they had packed up the old dunghill cock, who had died suddenly the day before of the pip, instead of a fine plump pheasant, which had found its way into the larder in some mysterious way during the night. More unpacking and packing. At last he got fairly under way in his old market gig, with his tiger in a smock frock, a jersey hat, leather gaiters, and hob-nailed shoes (that is Uncle John's livery), arriving at the station full half-an-hour before the time of starting; but that mattered little to Uncle John, and he consoled himself with the reflection, that it was better to be half-an-hour too soon than half a minute too late. The engine was heard screaming and puffing at last, and Uncle John had some misgivings when he thought he was to be tied to that iron monster for the next six hours. Courage however is a characteristic of my wife's family, and Uncle John, mastering his fears, took his seat with firmness and resignation.

When the train had been in motion half-an-hour, the morning sun broke through the mist and made the frost-covered fields look like beds of diamonds. Opposite to Uncle John sat a fresh-coloured man, rather bleary-eyed, as though his over-night potations had not been gruel, but withal he was a person with whom no one need be afraid to travel. A horsey-looking young man sat next to him, and appeared to be dozing, from having nothing to think about, or from not having brains to do it if he had had a subject for ratiocination. There was a fourth passenger in a white choker somewhat in want of the laundress, and who might have been a very poor curate of convivial habits, or an undertaker not so jovial as are those mortuary professors generally.

“Cold morning for sharing,” said the rosy passenger, looking round at his fellow-travellers. As no one else replied, Uncle John thought it only polite to say—“Yes it be, sir.”

“And good razors are getting scarce,” said the rosy one; “though I’ve been lucky, very lucky,” and he drew from his pocket a small brown paper parcel. “Is yourn a strong beard, Mister?” he enquired, examining Uncle John's chin with great interest.

“Pretty tightish,” said Uncle John. “It don't cut kindly of frosty mornings.”

The rosy passenger had by this time opened his packet, and displayed four highly polished razors tastefully mounted, and looking worth their weight in any metal except gold. “There, Mister, that's what I call luck, to have got hold of four such bits of stuff as these here. If I hadn't had a brother in the trade I should never have heard of 'em; but I did, and money didn't part us. They are beauties, ain't they, Mister?” said rosy, displaying one of them to the greatest advantage, flashing the blade in the sun until Uncle John winked again.

“He certainly be very smart, sir, very smart,” replied Uncle, and he meant it; for he had never had but one razor in his life, and that a black-handled instrument, which he kept in order on an old brace nailed to the side of the kitchen window. It was worth something to stand outside the window, and see Uncle John removing his stubble; the latter laid on in such profusion, that his chin looked like a prize cauliflower; the corners of his eyes screwed up, and filling with tears, as the old razor swept over his cheeks, leaving, when the latter was removed, half-a-dozen scarifications, and little tufts of untouched beard, as though his face were a field that had been badly mowed.

“Yours don't seem to be a clean cutter,” said the rosy passenger, again examining Uncle's face. Uncle John had discovered that as he drove through the keen frosty air in the earlier part of the morning. “A bad razor puts me out of temper for the day,” continued rosy. “You don't like it, I suppose, do you?”

Uncle John said, “It wasn't pleasant; and certainly did make an swear when one oughtn't.”

“Well, sir,”—the rosy passenger seemed to be suddenly struck with a benevolent idea,—“I tell you what I'll do, as somehow or

other I've taken a liking to you—I'll let you have one of my razors; or, if you like, a pair on 'em, and trust to luck and my brother in the trade to make it up to me. There, Mister, you shall have 'em for what they cost me, which was trade price—five bob a-piece?”

“You're very kind, I'm sure, sir,” said Uncle John. “What does five bob come to?” “Five bob—five shillings,” answered rosy; and his blue eyes fairly twinkled. The horsey-looking young man put his head out of the window, and the white choker blew his nose with unnecessary energy.

“Well, sir, since you be so good, I will take one of them.”

“Two, if you like,” generously offered the rosy passenger.

“Thankee, no, sir; I won't deprive you, seeing that I never use more than one razor at a time,” said my relative. And so the razor and Uncle John were sold and paid for.

The horsey-looking man now took up the running. Having yawned, and scratched his ear (a habit peculiar to most stable orators), the youth enquired if “Anybody knowed if it was true that Bill Scott had got a dark 'un for the Darby?” As nobody did know, the white choker remarked, “That racing was a very exciting amusement;” and horsey replied, “What was life without excitement?—only dish-water;” in which opinion the other passengers, with the exception of Uncle John, perfectly agreed. “Here we are, now,” continued horsey, “boxed up in this railway carriage for hours, and nothing to do but dazzle one's eyes, watching the telegraph wires, and dodging the posts, which seem to be coming in at the window. Is this life?”

The rosy passenger and the white choker both agreed that it was not.

“Then why put up with it? Here's four of us; here's a pack of cards which I put by accident in my pocket last night; let's have a friendly game at whist!”

The proposition met with the most cordial support from horsey and white choker.

“Me and the country gentleman (meaning my Uncle) will play you and the other party,” said horsey, and cut for partners after the rub—that's fair!”

Here Uncle John raised a little difficulty; he never played at cards except at Christmas time, and then only speculation, for horse-beans at a penny a dozen. Many men less fond of excitement than the horsey young man would have been annoyed at the derangement of their plans; but he was perfectly unmoved by the announcement.

“Well, let's do something,” he said smilingly, “to pass away the time. Here!—here's a bit of nonsense I saw done the other day at the Bishop of What's-his-name's house where I was staying;” and producing three cards, he passed them one over the other several times, and ultimately threw them with their faces downwards on the seat of the carriage. “Now, then, I'll bet a shilling nobody tells which is the Jack of Diamonds?”

The rosy passenger did bet a shilling, and instantly turned up the Jack of Diamonds, to the great mirth of all, including the loser.

“Here we go again,” said that philosopher. “Now, then; a crown you don't name the Queen of Hearts.”

The white choker grew desperate, staked a crown, and won.

“Better luck next time; faint heart never won fair lady. Here we go again! A crown you don't name the King of Clubs.”

The white choker and the rosy passenger both seemed very doubtful as to the whereabouts of his majesty; but Uncle John, whose interest had been awakened, said positively, “he knew where he was.” The horsey young man expressed his conviction that Uncle John was mistaken, and he offered to lay him half-a-crown or a sovereign he did not know. No man likes to be bullied out of an opinion; no man with any of the British lion's blood in his veins will be told tamely that he is saying what he cannot prove, and so Uncle John did lay half a sovereign, and did not turn up the King of Clubs. He was greatly astonished and mortified, not so much at losing his money, as that he thought he must look like a fool in the eyes of his fellow-passengers. So he tried again for a shilling, and won; and then he tried again for half-a-crown, and lost; and so continued to play with unvarying non-success, until he had parted with five “good golden sovereigns,” which he had in a mole-skin purse in his breeches-pocket.

London was reached at last. We live in King Street, about half a mile from the terminus, and had taken great pains to describe the situation of our house to Uncle John, as he could not name the day when we were to expect him in London, and therefore it was not possible to meet him on his arrival. We had advised him also to take a cab and drive at once to King Street; and Uncle John did as he was requested. On reference to the Post-Office Directory you will see that there are several King Streets in the Metropolis, and the cabman having been left the choice of selection, chose King Street, Whitechapel, fare three-and-sixpence—no doubt with the expectation of driving the deluded countryman back to King Street, — Square (Fare sixpence, from the Station). In this he was mistaken; for Uncle John was so surprised at the length of a London half mile and the high price of conveyance, that he paid the man in a pet, and knocked lustily at No. —, King Street, Whitechapel.

As no one answered his appeal, he knocked again, and the door was opened at length by a dirty old woman, who evidently had been making herself uncomfortable upon something stronger than water.

“Is Mr. Smith (the name of the writer) at home?” said Uncle John, very much surprised at the state of the domestic. “Is Mr. Smith at home?”

“Nobody lives 'ere,” muttered the old woman.

“What do you mean by that?” said Uncle John. “You live here!”

“O, I'm nobody, and I ain't Mr. Smith. I'm only takin' care of the house till it's let, or pulled down, or tumbles down; and so that's all about it,” mumbled the woman, and very deliberately shut the door in my uncle's face.

My Uncle stared about him, greatly perplexed at his situation; until seeing a good-natured-looking man at the door of a chandler's shop, he ventured to inquire if he was in King Street?

“King Street, sure enough,” said the man. “Did you want anybody?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Uncle John. “I want my nephew, Mr. Isaac Smith.”

“Isaac Smith?” repeated the man. “No Isaac Smith, as I knows of, and I suppose I've been asked to give credit by every one in this street at one time or other. No Isaac Smith, here. There's a Bob Smith—no, there isn't; he was transported last year.”

“Then be there another King Street in London?” inquired Uncle John.

“Another! Lord, man, there's hundreds! You'd better go to a hotel where they keeps a Directory, hire a private room and a bed, and stay there till you've gone through 'em—Smiths and King Streets. You can't do it under a week, no how.”

Uncle John stood aghast at this information, until the man, who really was a good-natured fellow, took the trouble to find a King-street somewhere in the direction he ought to take, and then saw him safely into the main thoroughfare.

Poor Uncle trudged away manfully with his carpet-bag in one hand, the basket in the other, and the umbrella tucked under his arm, until he came in sight of the river. He had gone astray he was certain; and beginning by this time to feel very hungry, he thought his better plan would be to turn in to the first public-house he came to, refresh himself, and inquire his way. As he stood deliberating this matter, two boys—one much larger than the other, began quarrelling directly in front of him, and the bigger of the two struck the other apparently a violent blow on the head.

“Oho! you blackguard,” roared the boy, “I won't stand it, that I won't; if I'd got a stick I'd break your head, I would. O, sir (appealing to Uncle John), lend me yer umbreller and I'll give him a topper.” And, without waiting to receive permission, the lad tugged the portly *parapluie* from under the arm of Uncle John. The bigger lad, like all bullies, was an arrant coward, and immediately took to his heels, pursued by the gallant little fellow whom he had ill-used. A true-born Englishman honours pluck and detests a coward, and Uncle John gazed with much pleasure at the chase, which ended by the disappearance of the two boys round the distant corner of the street. Uncle John continued looking in the direction the boys had taken, and his patience was getting rather exhausted, when a man dressed as the mate of a vessel accosted him.

“Are you waiting for your umbrella?” said the man. “Yes, sir, I be,” answered my Uncle, “and I wish he'd make haste back wi' it.”

“You had better give over wishing,” said the man, “he's the artfullest young dodger in London. He's bolted with your gingham, and no mistake; it was a got-up thing between 'em.”

Uncle John was incredulous for a few minutes, but at last came to the conclusion that the man was right, and that he had been victimized by the little rascal.

The seaman appeared a frank, straightforward fellow, and, as they walked along, Uncle John confided to him the difficulty he was in, and the plan he was proposing to himself to get out of it. The gallant tar complimented Uncle John upon the cleverness of his idea, and offered to take him to a quiet public-house of his acquaintance, where he would be sure to be well treated. Uncle John thanked his new friend, and they walked together to a dingy-looking house up a narrow street near Tower Hill. Uncle John formed an indifferent opinion of the sailor's taste, but said nothing, and ordered a rump-steak to be prepared for his meal. Whilst the meat was being prepared, the sailor rose from his seat, and looking carefully into the outer passage, closed the door and sat down in the chair alongside of Uncle John. In a whisper, scarcely audible by the man to whom it was addressed, he confessed that he was a smuggler, that cigars and tea could be bought of him at a price that would astonish the natives, that he had at that moment concealed in his coat-pockets a pound of the finest Havana at 10s.; scarcely more than the duty, and one pound of the finest gunpowder tea at 4s., honestly worth twice the money; that he had also at his crib some French brandy, twenty over proof, and that could be sold at 18s. per gallon, and sent home in a bladder, and if Uncle John wasn't a lat he would not let the opportunity slip, especially as he had got a carpet-bag to put 'em in.

Uncle John had been a great loser during the day, and we hope no one will think the worse of him if he did listen to the tempter, and, without reflecting that he was defrauding the revenue, bought the cigars and the tea, and did not find out that the one was brown paper and the other hawthorn-leaves until he made another discovery also. The sailor, with a candour which endeared him to Uncle John, told him that he had been a good deal on town, and for nothing either,—that there were fellows he had met and mixed with, who made it a rule to fleece every yokel they could meet with, and that if Uncle John carried his money about in the way he did, he'd be cleaned out to a certainty. The sailor then showed Uncle John where he kept his money—in the fob of his trousers, and as Uncle John's watch was not made at Geneva, but in the good city of York, some twenty years ago, there was plenty of room in the pocket constructed for its conveyance, you may be sure, for any loose cash which he had about him. With many thanks for his friendly caution Uncle John allowed the sailor to stow away his money in the pocket hitherto devoted exclusively to that wonderful work of science called his watch, and it was with some considerable surprise that he found afterwards that the process had reduced the ten sovereigns, so secured, to just as many farthings.

He reached our house at last, having been passed on from one policeman to another, like a lost child; and it required the utmost persuasion to make him go to bed and believe himself in safety. The next morning he was up before daybreak, and when I came downstairs to breakfast, I found him sitting in the hall with his carpet-bag upon his knees, waiting to be conducted back to the station. Words were of no avail. He would go back to Brightside instantly; and there was nothing to be done but to see him safely deposited in the train.

If any one doubt the truth of this story, they have only to go into the parlour of the Green Dragon at Brightside, any evening except Sunday, and ask the elderly gentleman who occupies the arm-chair in the left-hand corner of the room to verify it. That man is Uncle John. M.L.

THE FARM YARD.

(VIDE COLOURED SUPPLEMENT.)

We can scarcely do better than transcribe, by way of illustration to our “Farm Yard,” the following passage from an inedited Elizabethan play, the only copy of which, to the best of our information, is in our own hands, and the title of which is unfortunately missing. The scene is evidently between two young gallants, one a rustic, the other a town gentleman, and the latter is on a visit to his friend's father, Goldmore, the farmer.

Young Goldmore. Sit on this gate, I prithee. An thou wilt Breathe out, volcano-like, those clouds of smoke; I would old Raleigh had been hanged for teaching Thee and thy like to fumigate withal.

Courtier. Thou art an ass, and that is all about it.

Young G. Asses must bear. I'll prove I am no ass

By bearing no such taunt.

Courtier. Thy wit improves,

And yet 'twill bear the mending.

Young G. Bear again!

Courtier. Again, and yet again. Good luck, my Goldmore,

I pick my way down here but not my words.

A farm-yard's not the College of Sorbonne,

Nor need I hail yon cows with compliment,

Cry “pig” in phrase polite, speak French to fowls,

Or talk to thee in metaphysic style.

Young G. He who can be a gentleman at will

Will never be aught but a gentleman.

Courtier. An adage! By the bones of Dion, Thales,

And all the Seven, the clown comes forth in proverbs.

Next year we'll have thee write an almanac.

Young G. A man may live with beasts and birds, my Courtier,

Yet stand erect, like wise Ulysses, when

He quell'd Calypso with the herb called Moly.

Observe. Yon cow teacheth to ruminate:

Yon ass enjoineth patience; and yon cock

Boldness and watchfulness. From yonder pig

I learn that naught in nature is so low

But, well digested, we may gain thereby:

You duck, in water graceful, but on earth

An awkward thing, bids me to know my station:

You goose, with furious but with harmless hiss,

Shows me how worthless is the world's dispute:

Yon silly sheep teacheth cowardice

By his ill judged alarm; and —

Courtier. Hold, enough!

I'm school'd, and henceforth ne'er shall see a beast

But, learned Goldmore, I will think of thee.

(Edmund Spenser.)

(See pages 630, 631.)

Such a royal Christmas has Mr. Gilbert pictured from authorised sources in the large illustration engraved upon the preceding pages. This is a scene of truly regal festivity. He has chosen the upper end of the Hall, showing the great stone table, with the king and queen

We part from this picture of the Christmas of three centuries-and-a-half since, as from one of Time's stately pageants which bring the picturesqueness of the past into vivid contrast with the less fervid hospitalities of the present; reminding us that although Westminster Hall may be void and gloomy on the coming Christmas-day, greater enjoyment than was yielded by the prodigal heaps of luxury once consumed within those walls, is now scattered through the length and breadth of the land, and the rational wealth of Christmas is thus brought home to every man's fireside. Such is "the moral" of "A Royal Christmas in Westminster Hall."

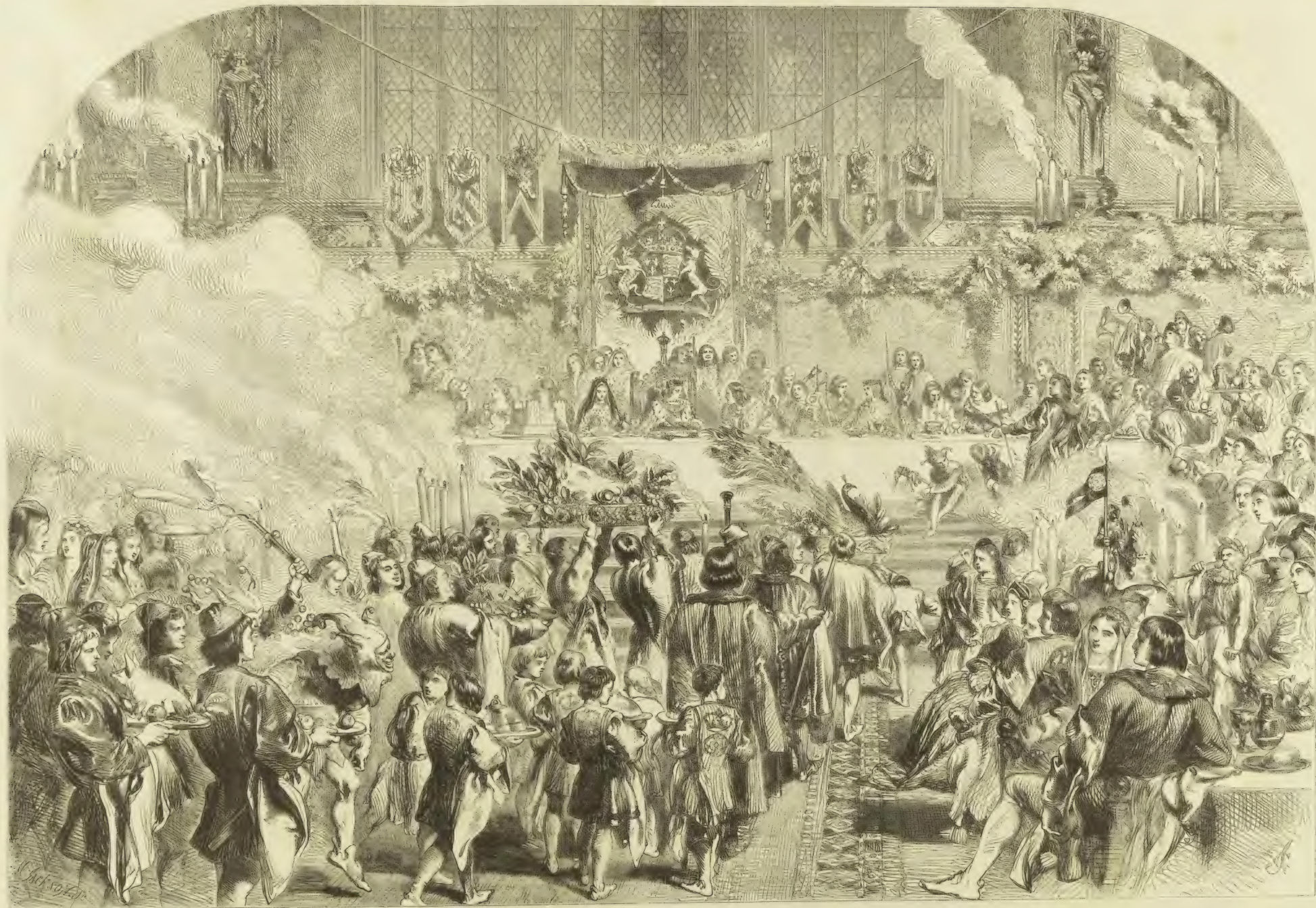
"Spoken fortunately happened to be at home. I really thought I was superintending the making of the Christmas pudding." "Jemmy," I said, "I've come to speak to you on a matter of business, and to borrow money—don't be alarmed—on a matter affecting our mutual interests. To help in at once. Jemmy, is a godfather in a godfather will be wanted in your little establishment. Should you have any objection to your humble servant in that capacity?"—"No objection at all," said Jemmy, "but there will be time enough to talk about that when——" "Yes, I know," said I, interrupting him. "I never resign your children, &c. But I shall be pretty sure to have occasion for a godfather, some day, at any rate. Now, Jemmy, business is business, and will you stand in my case, on condition that I stand in yours, in the important and responsible position of Sam?"—"Well," said Jemmy, "you know I may want two godfathers."—"Jemmy," I said, "you may want three at once—you may want as many as four—such accidents d

However, not only has that institution saved many of us a great deal of expense and trouble, but it has promoted good fellowship and conviviality; and its social tendency altogether has been so beneficial, that perhaps I may venture to sum up its merits by stating that, as the Coffin Clubs generally are to the deaths of the population, so, in proportion to the extent of its influence, is the Silver Cup Club to the births.

ARK ! where peals yon
swelling Anthem !
Hark ! it winds its
solemn way,
Loud on the blackening
midnight borne,
faint on the morning
grey ;
Now soaring, hovering,
floating, like the An-
gels' song on high,
Back from the wonder-
ingshepherd-groups,
to glory and the sky.
" Awake, awake, im-
mortal souls ! make
straight the way and
clear ;
Yon star is burning in
the East. Behold !
your God is near ! "

Past the dying maiden's
chamber, where the
night-flowers wave
at will,
And the heart's cry is
the louder that the
voice of love is still :

Hark ! around the palace chambers—hark ! along the palace walls !
Like the shouting of a conquering band, the strain of triumph falls.
As starts the monarch from his throne the armed host to meet,
Down drops the crown unto his knee, the purple to his feet ;
Awe-struck, he veils his humbled brow, while loud the Anthem rings—
“Glorv, glory in the Highest, unto Him, the King of Kings !”



HENRY THE SEVENTH KEEPING CHRISTMAS IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

AN ALLEGORY.

(See page 634.)

HEAVEN and Earth their prizes
Have hung on the Christmas Tree
All that man idolises,
There he can plainly see,
And Satan hath more of the prizes,
And most of the company.

Here are Sin's masqueraders—
Wolves in the clothing of lambs—
In juggle and falsehood, traders,
Dealers in cheats and shams.
Onward they rush
With a riotous crush ;
And, so that they reach the Tree's fair fruit,
They care not the axe is laid to the root.
Press on, ye rebel crew ;
The prizes are all in view.

Avarice, Greed, and Fraud,
Forget that ye are brothers !
Clutch at each glittering gaud—
Mitre, and sceptre, and crown,
Sword, and jewel, and star,
Dangling above you they are :—
Climb for them, tear them down !
Why should you leave them for others ?

Pride, and Power, and Place,
Vanity, Vice, and Ambition,
Gluttony, Envy, Sedition,
Race for the prizes, race !
Fight, and jostle, and grapple :
Climb unto every shoot
Hung with the world-sought fruit ;
Pluck at each Dead Sea apple,
Whose golden rind so temptingly flashes.
Bah ! 'tis an old wife's tale to a child,
To talk of their hollowness, shams, and ashes !
By fables be never beguiled.

From the precipice ne'er heed the danger ;
Ne'er pause to ponder and think,
How terribly nearsome and fearsome,
Is that yawning pit's horrible brink.
Scale it with plank and ladder ;
Self is all your concern :—
Let the hot wine of Passion burn
Your hearts, and make them madder !—
Ah ! would that it made them sadder.

You may clutch at the money-bags, miser ;
But gold will not buy off your fate.
Fool ! of Poverty thou art despiser,
Who art poorer than Poverty's state.

You may beat your white bosoms, frail daughters !
But that calm-looking, passionate breast
Throbs wild as the sea in unrest.
Doves of Peace brood not over such waters.

Ah ! would that you look'd above you,
To the Babe in the stable cave ;
With a boundless love He doth love you ;
In the greatness of might He can save.
Clutch not at the branches rotten,
Though their fruit is so fair to see ;
Look at the bough He hath gotten,
And the prize that He holdeth for thee !
No scathing lightnings blanch
That goodly, righteous Branch ;*
Fresh and bright is its verdure ever,
Like the Gospel promise that dieth never.

Look on that Branch with eager eyes ;
Bravely contend for its high-call'd prize.†
For you are balanced the weight of evil ;
But you scorn to look
To the Saviour's Book,
And rush to the side, where the Devil
Looks down, with a grim delight,
On his children's maddening revel
On their chosen Christmas night.

For Satan hath hung his prizes !
On the goodly Christmas Tree ;
And there, in Sin's disguises,
Crowd the thoughtless company.

CUTHBERT BENE, R.A.

* Jeremiah xxiii. 5.

† Philip. iii. 14.

THE LIGHTHOUSE AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

(See page 635.)

Among the stories connected with the Eddystone Lighthouse there was one which we read in extreme youth, and at which one still laughs, on the principle on which Mr. Hardcastle's servants prayed him not to tell the story of "Old Grouse in the Gun-room," (by the way, will anybody let us know what that story is ?) namely, that having laughed at it for twenty years—and a good many more—one is not going to leave off now. It was the story of the shoemaker's apprentice, who threw up his indentures and abandoned last and upper-leather to go and live in the lighthouse and trim the lantern. "I'm going to make the change," he said, "because I don't like confinement." We never see the oak-like structure on the vexed Eddystone, or any of its humbler and less celebrated kinsfolk, without thinking of the roving apprentice.

Our friend Mr. Read has depicted in the accompanying engraving the Lighthouse at Christmas time. It is not for us to say what sort of a picture he has made of it. But the selection of such a subject seems to us to involve a marked and striking contrast to the usual amiability of the artistic nature. Without needlessly insulting our young friends, home for the holidays, with a line from the *Eton Grammar about arties*, and *ecc sinit esse feros*, we cannot help thinking that an artist who had voluntarily chosen such a theme must have been suffering at the moment under a fit of displeasure with mankind. Because, really, if there be one situation and inci-

dent of the year calculated to afflict a benevolent contemplator thereof, it is the case of the trio of islanders who keep their Christmas in the lighthouse, far away at sea. And this is what Mr. Read has set before us. Having vainly tried to pick a hole in his engraving, we revenge ourselves by picking a large one in his motives for designing it.

At the little door, against which the waves sometimes thunder with a pertinacity that would almost break down the stolidity of a St. James's Square porter, and compel him to open the portal, stands one of the lighthouse-men, who has heard the shout from the boat. In fact he has been waiting for it with considerable anxiety, for he has an idea that the wind is likely to get up, and in that case there may be no reaching the rock with provisions for days and days, and Christmas on biscuit and salt junk is not his ideal of Yule revelry. He has an idea that the boat that brings the lighthouse supplies might have arrived sooner, and he has some notion of hinting to the men that he knows it is Christmas Eve, and that they sat longer in the Foul Anchor than was necessary, besides that they have been pulling a good deal more gently than they would do were salvage in the offing. People grow very cross and suspicious while they are kept waiting, even by people whom they like and trust ; and one of the greatest writers of the age (ourself) has pointed out in a pathetic essay that to keep a friend waiting is a wilful tempting of fortune to sunder the golden thread of your friendship. Nathaniel Boltispear, that is his name (and if you want to know how we knew it, we have no hesitation in saying that it is carved by his own hand at the back of the door at which he stands), may not be thinking about a golden thread, but rather about a good tough rope which he will shortly toss into the bows of the boat ; but he is not pleased at his provisions being so late, and has for the last hour, between whiffs of his pipe, been considering whether he will not give the fellows, now approaching, a bit of his mind.

For Boltispear—we are not sure whether your eyes are good enough to make out the fact from his countenance—has a spice of sentiment in his nature. It is not because he is always holding a candle to the Power of the Air that he is not of a sympathetic and affectionate temperament. Indeed, by the way, we wrong him—he is always holding a candle in the opposite interest to that of the influence proverbially busy in a gale of wind. He lights it to help as many folks as he may out of the way of that purveyor for the submarine British Bank—the Davidean Locker—that defrauds all depositors. Nathaniel is a gentle-hearted lighthouse-man, and one worthy to have lived in Rabelais' Lantern-Land.

Nathaniel Boltispear was going to tell the boatmen a bit of his mind. So he will, but quite another bit from that which he had sliced off for their edification. For now that he can see the boat and its contents, he beholds that there are passengers whom he had little expected. How he bawls up to Samuel Pargill, who is up in the lantern.

"Sa—a—a—a—m !"

"Now then," responds Samuel, to this prolonged invocation.

"Here's your old woman, and mine, and Bill's girl and boy."

"You be hanged," retorts the unbelieving Samuel, and it is perhaps to his credit that the repartee takes so mild a form.

"Come down," says Nathaniel, much too excited to enter into argument, and leaving Samuel Pargill, as becomes a philosopher, to the convictions time will bring about. He hurries down the steps, the rope is flung as a confused greeting from everybody is hurled at him, the bowl is made fast, and in a few minutes the women are in the snug little chamber, and the boat's crew (as they are bound to do) are delivering in the provisions.

Christmas Eve in the lighthouse, and very jolly indeed the party is. Mrs. Boltispear, though called an old woman, is nothing of the kind, but a handsome, buxom matron, who was a very pretty girl ten years ago, and whose laugh might be heard by the folks on board that vessel you see out there. Mrs. Pargill has more right to the title of old woman, and it is thought that though a good person in the main, her unceasing eloquence may have had something to do with Samuel's selection of a lighthouse life. Bill's children are not very conversational in the presence of their elders, but they eat and drink in a way that must convince their father that their health has not suffered by their depression at his absence from home. The three men are very glad to see the representatives of their households, and if Mr. Pargill's ecstasy is the least demonstrative, there is no reason to suppose that it is unreal. The boat's crew have landed—or rather lighthoused—all the provisions, and join the party, and few rooms on shore hold a merrier set than has gathered in the middle of the sea that Christmas Eve.

You may easily imagine that the men have the least to say for themselves. Indeed, what can three men, who have been shut up on that rock for a month, without a soul to speak to, have to say ? Were they three Napoleons on a St. Helena, they must, under the circumstances, have become silent men. Pargill has a grievance, touching some great thick high stockings which the old woman forgot to send him ; but she has brought them now, and throws them at his cross old head, and laughingly defies him to say another word. Bill and Pargill have a story against Nathaniel for bawling out in his sleep to some imaginary young lady to "leave him alone ;" and with this anecdote, placed in every variety of light, and recapitulated at about thirty intervals throughout the sitting, they vainly strive to arouse the jealousy of merry Mrs. Boltispear. There is no particular grievance or anecdote connected with Bill, but he takes occasion to observe, a good many times in the course of the *séance*, that a meeting like this makes amends ; and the sentiment is favourably received, and nobody asks what the amends are made for.

But the women have a month's news from the shore, and they waste no time in pouring it all out for the refection of their friends. As no moment is to be lost, they both open at once, and, except when they stop to contradict each other (for women have a marvellous faculty, while talking as fast as possible, of hearing one another), the stream of news flows on in a boisterous duet. The lighthouse speedily learns that Jenny's fellow has enlisted, and the girl is in despair,—that the Harbour-Master has been blow'd up by the Admiralty, and the very words that came down by the telegraph are quoted, and are extremely coarse for so polite a gentleman as Sir Charles Wood—that somebody from London has taken the house that is haunted—that Phil Carter's boy has gone to sea—that Nancy Woods at the "Bells" has had an offer from her master, and there are reasons for thinking that if the marriage comes off, the ostler, who is of a tempestuous character, will do something desperate—that old Blowbee has been convicted of smuggling, and the magistrates punished him doubly, for getting a lawyer from London instead of one of their own sons in the place—that Ned Carson fell into the fire while he was tipsy, but

only burned his red whiskers off, and has taken the pledge—that the horses came down and the circus-riders, and little Tom Fowler asked whether one of the lady equestrians was not a real angel from the sky, for which ignorance and superstition his grandmother whipped him well—that the price of bread is perfectly dreadful, and that the bakers lay it on the millers, and the millers on the farmers, and the farmers on the landlords, and the landlords on the government, but any how there's no reduction—that Jack Fiske and his cousin had a regular stand-up fight, and Jack was thrashed, and since that the relatives have been like brothers—that Wheeler's blue dog has been killed by eating a star-fish—that—

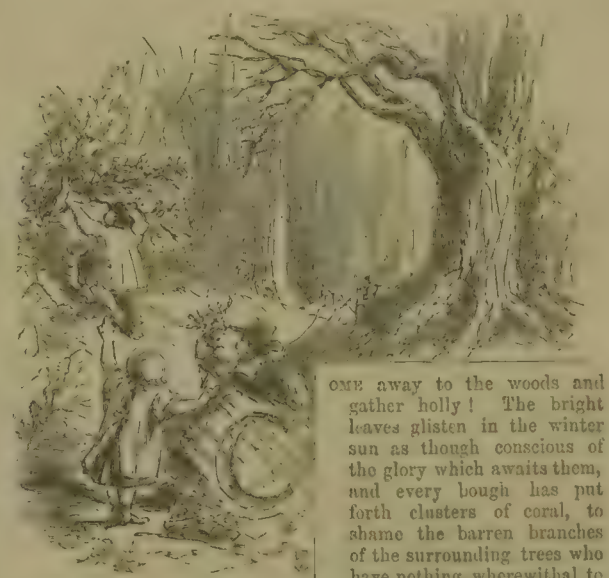
But, on second thoughts, what right have we to report the conversation of these worthy people ? We feel that it is an unwarrantable intrusion on their privacy. The fault is Mr. Read's, for putting the subject into our heads. Not another word of the talk shall we set down. Nathaniel has been a little uneasy during the last hour or so, and has been listening to the wind ; and he thinks that the sooner the boat is on shore the better. It would be very jolly for them all to stop,—but suppose it came on to blow, and they were all kept on the rock for a month, as has happened, and no boats could get out. How long would the provisions last ? So he artfully gets Pargill to take the ungracious initiative, and hint at the necessity of departure, which Mr. Pargill does in the broadest way, short of pushing his friends down-stairs, ever heard of. Much hugging, and kissing, and good-wishes,—and the party once more establishes itself in the boat, which pulls off under a parting fire of exhortations to the visitors to take care of themselves.

And then the lighthouse is left to its original loneliness, and when Nathaniel Boltispear has got over the excitement of the evening, and of watching the weather until long after the boat has had time to reach land,—and the wind does not get up after all—he begins to think that Lantern-Land is a dull place after all. And on Christmas Day the men are all moody, and at night they think of the enjoyment and sociality on shore, and—in short—they feel, for some twenty-four hours, particularly dreary and sulky. And Mr. Read, who very likely passes for an amiable man, and may indeed deceive the world by consistently acting up to that character, selects for his engraving a subject suggestive, by the direct course we have taken, of so much discomfort and melancholy. We have felt it a duty to point out the heinous atrocity of his conduct, and we utterly decline to receive as excuse, that his engraving is very beautiful. We hope we are made of sterner stuff.

S. B.

THE HOLLY CART.

(See Coloured Supplement.)



ome away to the woods and gather holly ! The bright leaves glisten in the winter sun as though conscious of the glory which awaits them, and every bough has put forth clusters of coral, to shame the barren branches of the surrounding trees who have nothing wherewithal to look merry in at this pleasant Christmas time. First cut a mighty load for the church, that when Dives warm in pocket goes there on Christmas Day, he may remember what time it is, and give abundantly to the poor and needy. Now cut largely for the Old Manor House, where they still do Christmas honour with minstrelsy and feasting, welcoming all who come in his name to a seat by the hearth where the yule-log blazes and sparkles like a small bonfire.

Let the old house look hale and green, so long as it invites such guests as Neighbourly Love and Christian Charity to make merry within its walls. Now cut with no sparing hand for cottage homes, that the poor indwellers may remember whose festival it is, and that he also was poor and despised of man, but did the will of the "Father which art in Heaven," and bore his cross meekly and patiently to the end. Now a load for the city, for though Lady Fashion may deny it admittance to her luxurious rooms, Molly in the kitchen will give it welcome and make the whitewashed walls of her underground dominions a very bower of green, and which even her dull fancy will people with old familiar faces, till she has a party of her own, although no followers are allowed, not even at Christmas time. Then the jolly butcher will covet some of the best berry-covered sprigs to garland his prize sirloins and fat-laden ribs, deeming it a disgrace to a beef-loving land, that such bovine triumphs should go to the spit like the nursery mutton ! It is our belief that he would not sell without regret that streaky and mottled cattle of ox flesh to any lean-visaged man. He would take a penny a pound less from a round-faced well-fed customer, one who by his looks gave token that he knew what a prime cut was, and would eat with appreciative thankfulness. Don't forget the poulterer who has no ordinary turkey, no mere common-fed goose, now upon his altar waiting to be offered up to Christmas. Ribbons and holly are due to that precocious young gander who devoted the last months of a well-spent life to cramming himself for civic honours. That Titan of a turkey will not be eaten and forgotten, for his weight will be often remembered at the market table. Deck him with holly-sprigs, for Gobble his parent hath no worthier son than he.

A few sprigs—for charity's sake let them have the brightest leaves and the reddest berries,—to dress poor city labourers' rooms from the cellars to the garrets. Let the leaves be bright, that they may catch the little sun which struggles into narrow streets and through grimy windows. Let the berries be red, that they may show cheerful patches on the smoky walls, and carry the observer's thoughts away to country memories of woods and fields, and limpid streams and fresh sweet air !

Pile more upon the cart ! Old Jack the donkey is equal to the situation ! He knows it is Christmas time, or should do so, for did not one of his race bear the most precious load that ever passed through the gates of Jerusalem ?

M. L.

THE CHRISTMAS HAMPER.

CHAPTER I.

(See page 627.)



BY one who has visited Camden Town, may have observed a row of neat modern houses, with their fronts partly stuccoed, and a feeble attempt at a balcony at the first floor windows. The houses are occupied principally by clerks and warehousemen, who have preferred, like honest fellows, the cares of a home and family to the pleasures of Cremorne, billiard-rooms, tavern-clubs,

cheap concerts, and a *toilette à la Moses*. We do not wish to imply that all unmarried clerks and warehousemen are disposed only to folly and dissipation. We know to the contrary that there are many who apply their leisure and their means to the best purposes; and we hail with most pleasurable anticipations of future good the increased leisure secured to them by what is called the Early Closing Movement.

Some of the inhabitants of *Jemima Parade* (for so the little row is designated) having no families, were used to let lodgings to persons whose means or inclination did not allow them to furnish and occupy houses of their own. And it is with Mr. and Mrs. Brazier, who were so situated, and who took in as lodgers Mr. and Mrs. Stirling, that our story has now to do.

The rooms—or apartments as they were described always on the little card exhibited in the windows when tenants were wanted—were furnished in the style peculiar to such places. Imagine six chairs covered with blue moreen, and more or less lumpy from their stuffing; a sofa of limited dimensions, a little depressed in the middle, and pervaded by a faint odour of hay; a round table in the centre, that creaked when it was leaned upon; a very bold-patterned drugget (with hearth-rug to match) on duty as a carpet; a small cheffonier, that shut very nearly, ornamented with two decanters and a few wine-glasses, two slips of moreen, and two of muslin, to represent curtains; a looking-glass four feet by two-and-a-half—from the irregularity of surface by no means a favourite with young ladies—and you have a broker's inventory of one of the furnished rooms in *Jemima Row*. And in such a room on Saturday evening, December 24, 1854, Mrs. Stirling was seated alone; the fire was very low, but for some reason or the other, she hesitated to ring the bell for more coals, as she was justified in doing, according to contract with Mrs. Brazier. The candles were unlighted on the table, and the room would have been in complete darkness, but for the gas-lamp outside, which sent up one bright streak, and illuminated the portrait of Mrs. Brazier, on the wall opposite to the fire-place. Mrs. Stirling's eyes were fixed upon that luminous visage, and had there been light enough, tears would have been seen resting beneath the lids of her own pretty blue orbs, ready to testify to some hidden sorrow.

We have only a simple tale to tell; and have no desire to make a mystery of anything connected with it. The truth is, Mr. Stirling had been some time without a situation; and the little money he had saved was almost exhausted. Day after day he had had promises of employment, but day after day came disappointment, until he had become mistrustful of everybody—except Jane, his wife. He had loved her so long, ever since they went to a dame's school together—she had trusted him so much—marrying him, though his fortunes were not promising, and though her father and mother, kith and kin, had warned her of coming poverty, and harshly told her, that as she made her bed, so she must lie upon it. Yet she had trusted to find happiness in his love, and he had still faith in Jane, his wife.

We will call her Jane henceforward, as it is pleasant to be upon easy terms with such a good little woman. Well, Jane sat listening for George Stirling's footstep, for—silly little wife!—she fancied she could tell it from the hundred others that passed backwards and forwards under her windows, and, strange to say, she was right. That was he ascending the steps, and before he could reach the knocker (perhaps he hesitated a little before he found courage to touch it), she had dried her eyes and opened the door, and kissed his pale quivering cheek, as he paused for a moment on the threshold. The door closed, she put her arm round his waist, and though the passage and the staircase were rather narrow, would insist on walking in that way up-stairs to their little room. When they arrived on the first landing, she said in the cheeriest tone imaginable—well, perhaps there was the slightest tremulousness in it—

"What news, dear?"

"Bad—always bad!" he replied, his voice quite husky and sorrowful.

"No, no. It will not always be bad," she said, standing on the stair above him, and giving him another and a longer kiss. "The year is nearly at an end, and with the new one a change will come, depend upon it."

And so with her arms around his neck now, she led him up to their little room. Jane hastened to light the candles, and to draw down the blinds, doing this with such alacrity and cheerfulness, that you would have fancied she had some great cause for joy concealed in her heart, instead of a lump of sorrow that chilled it almost.

"A bad fire, Jane," George said, more for the sake of saying something, than from any care he had about the fire at that time.

"Yes, it is not a very good one, I must confess," replied his wife, piling together the few coals in the grate.

"Not the sort of fire we used to have on Christmas Eve," remarked George, "is it, Jane?"

"Dear George," said Jane, standing behind him, and clasping her hands round his neck, "it was not from carelessness that the fire got so low—but—"

"Go on, Jane—but what?" asked George.

"But, as I sat here alone, the light from the street playing upon that hard face on the wall there, I thought that this week we should be her debtors, and I had not the courage to ring the bell."

"My poor child!" exclaimed George, dragging her face to his. "Not so bad as that; though bad enough, God knows. There's the money for the rent at any rate, if not for a Christmas dinner. So

ring the bell, and let us have our due. Jane kissed him again (bless kissing, say we), and did as she was told, like a good and obedient wife. Mrs. Brazier answered the bell in person.

"You rung, I believe," said Mrs. Brazier; her tone and manner implying that there was pent up within her all the elements of an eruption, of sufficient capacity to smother any amount of lodgers who should prove to be rentless. How Brazier—who was the mildest form of man-milliner—dared to propose to her, and then marry her, was always a matter of wonder to his acquaintance. The general supposition is, that one night Brazier had taken too much supper (the only time he was ever known to have done so) when Mrs. B. was present, and committed himself by offering her his hand, and that she called the next Sunday, and, carrying him to church like a lap-dog, married him, having herself taken out a licence at Doctors' Commons.

"You rung, I believe!" not inquiringly, but as the declaration of a fact that could not be disputed.

"Yes, ma'am," said George, "we want some more coals, if you please."

"Coals—yes—coals," remarked Mrs. Brazier.

"Yes, coals, if you please," interposed Jane; who saw by George's compressed lip and dilated eye, that he suspected what was passing in Mrs. Brazier's mind, and was getting angry.

"May I, without offence," said Mrs. Brazier, evidently intending to be as offensive as possible, "present my bill for the week;" and, without waiting for permission to do so, she placed the document upon the table.

"Mrs. Brazier," exclaimed George, jumping up, "this is—impertinent and brutal! You would turn us into the streets the moment we could not pay you—"

"I would, on course," said Mrs. Brazier, as though she were asserting a high principle of her order. "I would; and I will, unless you are in a position to discharge your liabilities."

"Thank God, I am!" replied George. "More than another week we do not remain here. There's your money, ma'am, and—"

"Please to attend to our request," said Jane, interposing. "This is Christmas Eve, and we wish to be at peace with everyone at such a time."

"Christmas Eve! Fudge!" exclaimed Mrs. Brazier, bouncing out of the room, and politely leaving the door open after her.

In spite of her fudge, Mrs. Brazier had been keeping Christmas Eve since the morning, and principally with herself, as the bottle marked "G." in the liquor-stand could testify.

George buried his face in his hands the moment the woman left the room.

"What is the matter?" said his little wife, hugging his head to her bosom. "Why are you so distressed by what that foolish woman has uttered? We are out of her power, and in a few days shall be free from her presence even."

"Jane, it is of no use deceiving ourselves any longer," cried George. "Fortune, fate, or what you will, is against me; and there is nothing before me but poverty and degradation. I think I could bear all, if not patiently, at least in silence, but for you, my own devoted wife. I had no right to have married you. I took you from a happy, plentiful home, to share my beggar's fortunes."

"Hush! dearest, hush!" said Jane, placing her pretty hand upon her husband's mouth.

"No, Jane," continued George. "No—let me speak, or my heart will burst. I tell you I can bear it no longer. You know how proudly I have resented your father and mother's treatment of me. You know how unforgiving they are of the man, who took their fairest and dearest child from them,—but I have resolved what to do. To-morrow is Christmas Day; and I intend to walk down to Stevenage, and ask their pardon for what I have done; to tell them that I have left you here in the power of a brutal woman, who will next Saturday turn you into the streets, unless they forgive you, and take you home again."

"George, dearest George, you do not mean what you say?" exclaimed Jane; and for the first time giving unrestrained course to her tears.

"I do! I do!" continued the husband; though I guess the result! I shall be taunted and reproached by them, but you will have found a home this bitter Christmas time, and that will be something! As for me, I must bear the curse that is upon me!"

He paced up and down the room for a few minutes whilst Jane remained silent and motionless. At length she rose and intercepted him in his walk, and said—her sweet low voice as musical as a child's—"George! You have never given me pain until this night! Poor dear! I know—I have felt how much you must have suffered from these daily disappointments, but I always thought you had a comforter within yourself. I thought you had accustomed yourself to remember how much of good there was still about us—health and strength to labour, and a strong faith in each other's love. I thought you had a steadfast reliance upon Him who 'tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,' and never doubted but that in his own good time he would reward your trust in his mercy. And you would send me again to my father's home, and think I could be at ease knowing that you were fighting the battle of life alone!—that whilst you were sad and lonely I could be contented among the gay and happy! O, George, would that be love!—would that be love?"

"Forgive me, Jane, forgive me!" was all that he could say.

"I have nothing to forgive, dear George," continued Jane. "You have not offended me by ingratitude and mistrust. Let us ask forgiveness where we have most offended." There was a silence for some minutes, and when they looked again into each other's faces they saw both peace and hope.

"Well, Jane, and so to-morrow is Christmas Day!" said George, rather cheerfully. "I'm afraid ours will be but a small party, but we must strive to make it a happy one. I am not going to grumble again, but I could not help contrasting my own anticipations of to-morrow with those of some old city friends of mine. They are all going to-night to a little club they hold at the Camden Arms, and wanted me to join them."

"And why did you not go?" inquired Jane. "I'm sure a little cheerful society would do you no harm"—patting his cheek.

"Why! Ha! ha! You know why I could not have made one of their party, even had I cared to have left you alone, Jenny. I had no money to spare."

Jane regarded him with a queer, pleasant look, and pursing up her lips, and half-closing her eyes, making the prettiest ugly-face at him imaginable, she went into the next room.

George wondered what it all meant.

"I thought what it would come to some day, if I did not take care of our great property," said Jane, laughing. "But you see what it is to have a clever provident little wife; so there, go, have a merry evening with your friends, my dear old boy!" and she kissed him once more, and put into his hand a very little purse that evidently had very little money in it.

Would you believe it? The selfish fellow never so much as thanked her for it, but put on his hat and almost ran down-stairs out of the house; no doubt to join the good-fellows at the club.

If Jane's face ever looked happy it did then. Its brilliancy completely extinguished the candles, and they were moulds with plaited wicks.

CHAPTER II.

This will be a very short chapter, but a very important one; and the incidents it records took place in the counting-house of Messrs. Weldon and Jolly, Merchants, in Lothbury.

"Jolly," said Weldon, "I think you had better go and see what the old boy has done for the Christmas hamper."

"I think so, too," replied Jolly. "Let me see, what is Bagot's salary (referring to a private ledger unlocked before him). Bagot has £300 a-year. Suppose we give the old boy £200."

"Or 250," said Weldon. "He has served our house faithfully for thirty years."

"So long!" exclaimed Jolly. "Then make it the £300; and let him enjoy himself for the rest of his days!"

"With all my heart," said Weldon; "so you write and tell him so; and I will send a letter of engagement to George Stirling, at—?" and he looked inquiringly at Jolly.

"A hundred to begin with," replied the junior—"that's what I had."

This conversation occurred at four o'clock in the afternoon of Christmas Eve, and the letters were written forthwith, and posted in due course by the office boy.

CHAPTER III.

You must run with us into the country for a short time, if you please, and make one at a farmer's breakfast table. The fare is plentiful and homely, but there is a gloom over the faces of the party assembled round it. The farmer chips his bread and jerks it into his mouth, and trifles with the meat upon his plate, as though his thoughts were enough to satisfy his appetite. His dame stirs her tea ten times as often as required to melt the sugar and mingle the cream, and the children cram their mouths twice as full as necessary, in order to keep themselves quiet. Would you know why matters are in this state? It is because little Lucy, one of the farmer's daughters, has asked a very simple question, and no one has been able to answer it. This was it:

"What do you think sister Jane has got for her Christmas dinner?" That was all.

But father and mother had long known of George's struggles and disappointments, and kept to their stubborn resolve to let their daughter Jane "lie on her bed as she had made it," though they suffered more, much more in contemplating her poverty than she did in bearing it. They were both picturing in their own minds her narrow room and the fireless grate, the table scantily furnished with food and friends, contrasting them with the merry meeting and the plentiful feast they were looking forward to on the morrow. The larder was overstocked with game which Tom the son had shot during the week, to say nothing of turkeys and geese that had run out their allotted space in the farm-yard.

But no one answered Lucy's question.

Breakfast ended, the farmer drew his chair before the fire and took to his pipe, a sure sign that something was wrong with him. Tom went out to the fields with his gun, whilst the dame and Lucy washed up the cups and saucers.

At last the farmer spoke. "I tell you what it is, mother——" He paused, and the person addressed merely asked "What?"

"What time does the next train go to London?"

"12-15, father," answered little Bob, who prided himself upon his knowledge of the time-table.

"It don't signify," said the farmer, "I can't bear it any longer."

"Dear what, father?" inquired his wife, her eyes glistening again.

"Why, I give in! I must give in! I can't bear to think that Jenny's starving whilst we're stuffing and cramming ourselves like so many Christmas turkeys."

The dame wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron, and exclaimed "Oh dear, oh!"

"George Stirling oughtn't to have done it," said the farmer, "but I know from them as know all about it, that he is kind as kind can be to her, and does try to make an honest living, but things are against him."

"What I always said!" exclaimed the dame,—but she had not, we assure you, or matters might have been mended long ago. "So we'll make it up before Christmas Day, and eat our dinner in peace and charity with all men. You pack 'em up a good Christmas hamper, and I'll just smoke another pipe and think over a letter I'll write and put in it."

Lucy and Bob danced with joy; for Jenny had been as kind and good a sister as she was a wife; and a noble collection of "beasts of the field and birds of the air" was crammed into the hamper by one and the other, nor was father's letter forgotten.

We have little more to tell, except that George did not go to the club. No! the foolish fellow's heart was so full that he could not stay in the house, but walked about the dark and silent streets, crying from excess of happiness. He returned home just in time to pay the portage of the Christmas hamper, which was more welcome to Jane for the letter it contained than it would have been if stuffed with spices without it.

N.B.—Weldon and Jolly have raised George's salary to £200 a-year this Christmas, because he has been diligent and faithful in the discharge of his duties, and because he is the father of the prettiest baby that was ever born, at least so George says, and who can doubt such impartial testimony?

MARK LEMON.

SONG TO WINTER.

(See Coloured Supplement.)

Give old Winter welcome! welcome, for his coming;
Sets the viols playing, sets the brown-ale humming.

What a proud old fellow is the lordly Winter!
He must have the earth snow-strewn ere he deigns to enter.

He will ford no river, he must aye walk over,
So his vassals bridge the streams with a crystal cover.

Leaves and fruits and flowers are not his attendants;
He must have his trees and bowers hung with diamond pendants.

He will not have much of toil, scarce a half-day's measure;
Then he burns his midnight oil but to take his pleasure.

Give old Winter welcome! welcome, for his coming
Sets the viols playing, sets the brown-ale humming.

M. L.

When is a whist player like a chimney-sweeper?

When he follows suit. (Soot.)

Ying! et un is, perhaps, the only way in which young ladies, at twenty-one, will play "for love."

When is a sportsman most like a bishop?

When he delivers a charge.

What rule in arithmetic does a young surgeon find it most difficult to get into?

Practice.

The Glass of which a young lady frequently takes too much?

Her looking-glass.

What Bishop wears the largest hat?

The one that has the largest head.



THE CHRISTMAS TREE



THE LIGHTHOUSE, CHRISTMAS EVE. DRAWN BY S. READ.



HOME AND CASTAWAY.—DRAWN BY S. READ AND J. A. PASQUIER

HOME AND CASTAWAY.

(See page 635.)

“I didn't mean it,” said Alice, jumping up from the heavy cottage chair, in which she had been rocking for some minutes with little advancement to the Christmas cleanings of her home. “I didn't mean it, and there is an end of the matter.”

And down the energetic little wife went upon her knees, and baring her arms, she dashed the scrubbing-brush upon its work, and scoured vigorously, as if she would rub away some vexatious recollections as well as purify her kitchen floor.

But it was of no use, the floor became clean, but the recollection could no more be got out than the stain in Holyrood Palace. It came back, and back, and presented itself in every aggravating way, and made the poor little woman lose heart in her labour. Once she sat up, in an attitude that derived all its poetry from the sentiment that prompted it (for the sight of even a pretty woman asquat on a floor, her dress soiled with her work, her eyes full of tears, and her head resting on an old scrubbing brush, is not pleasing at the first glance), and said, sobbing,

“And if I had said ten times worse, he oughtn't to have gone abroad before making it up. He's forgot all about it, long ago.”

“Not he, Alice Wybrow, so take that to you, and make yourself happy,” said a woman's voice.

A smartly and yet slatternly dressed woman stood at the cottage door, and gazed at Alice with a sort of contemptuous expression. The new comer was handsome in her way, with bold dark eyes, a full figure, and a foot almost too small for her height, and unusually small in the class of life to which she belonged. Her dress was somewhat miscellaneous, most of the articles which composed it had been far too costly when new, for a person of her station, but they were frayed and soiled, and moreover were unsuited to each other. It seemed as if a collection of presents, or of purchases made at various times, had furnished her wardrobe. The most prominent was a scarlet silk skirt, which first flamed upon the eye of the kneeling Alice.

“So you've sent your husband to sea with bad words in his ears, Alice,” continued the woman. “Bad that, but he knew what he was about when he married a scold!”

“Scold!” returned Alice, angrily.

“Well, she shan't be a scold, then, only a woman who turns her husband out on the sea with abuse, and flashes up as red as my gown when a friend tells her of it.”

“A friend, indeed!” said Mrs. Wybrow, rising. “But I won't quarrel with you, Sarah. Come in, and sit down, woman.” And getting rid of her momentary indignation—for we may as well say at once that Alice, with a quick temper and a ready tongue, was as good a little wife as a fisherman need have—she brought out one of the chairs from the rack into which women love to throw furniture when the operation called cleaning is going on, dusted it in a second, and placed it near the door for her visitor.

“No, I'll stand in the sunshine,” said the other. “It's none too much of it we get in Spindletown.”

“Have the chair in the sunshine, then,” said Alice, “can't you?”

“Ay, that's better,” returned the woman, taking her seat outside, but placing her little feet on the threshold, perhaps from a habit she may have had of exhibiting those attractions whenever she had an opportunity. They were encased in the neatest shoes, which, far too fragile for the roads and by-lanes of a fishing village, had suffered considerably.

“Them shoes would be the better for my scrub,” said Alice laughing. “And you'll be the better for something else, I reckon,” she added, going to a brown old corner cupboard, that looked out of place with its rich polished mahogany against the plastered walls of the cottage, and filling a tiny cup with a liquid;—it may have paid duty, give John Wybrow the benefit of the doubt.

“Better luck than some folks deserve,” the scarlet woman gave, by way of a toast, and emptied the cup with much relish.

“Without going to praise our stuff,” replied Alice, “I think it deserved a civiler word.”

“Civil enough, Alice, as times go. And it's the thought that has been in your mind all day. It was in your mind when the wind got up, and you looked out to sea about noon. It was in your mind when you sent the children to pick crabs, because their voices made you pettish and angry. It was in your mind as you sat rocking in that chair, and after, when you sat crying on that floor. And it is in your mind now, girl, and you'd give a hundred pounds, if you had them, to drive it out.”

“And where were you, to see me at noon?” asked Mrs. Wybrow, with a woman's instinctive promptitude at seizing the least inconvenient part of a charge.

“Over with Thirza Benning, there, in the way of business. Not watching you, woman alive, if that's what you want said to save the brush from flying at my head. Business, well done and honourably paid for.”

“I don't know what business Thirza Benning can pay for,” retorted the wife, “but if she has money to spare she'd better buy her little children some decent boots. The youngest, Janet, is tramping now in an old pair of Charley's that I put on her because I wouldn't see her poor little feet cut as they are. If she's money she's no pride.”

“If she follows my counsel,” replied Sarah, “Janet may ride in her coach some day, and then Mrs. Benning will be glad that she wasn't penny wise and pound foolish.”

“I wish you would stop over in Spindletown, Sarah Fleming, if you can't come here without bringing the mischief. Have you been talking your wicked rubbish about the stars to that fool of a woman, and taking her money for it?”

“Quite an informer's question,” said Sarah laughing. “Do you mean to inform against me?”

“Serve you right if somebody did; and somebody will, one of these days.”

“It's your turn to prophesy now, I suppose. But be merciful to me for once,” she added, with mock supplication. “For your children's sake, for your dear husband's sake, now tossing on the sea. Let me off for once, and I'll tell your fortune without asking even to see your money.”

“If you say a word about it I'll bang this door in your face if you was the Queen of Sheba,” said Alice, the last phrase being intended to add a very unnecessary force to her utterance of the menace.

“The Spindletown folk must be wise folk, I'm thinking,” continued she. “Their heads must be dazed like with the noise of their wheels and rollers, and they don't rightly know what they're about, most times, or else you would never have a silk like that for telling things that a person like me knows to be lies and folly.”

“You called me uncivil, Alice, just now. Is it civil to say sharp things under your own roof, and threaten to knock one out of doors if one answers?”

“And that's true,” said Alice, “but you make me wild when you tell me of little Janet Benning, that's in my child's boots because she has none of her own, riding in a coach, and that you take money for telling such stuff.”

“It's stuff now, Alice, but if Mrs. Benning believes it, and acts up to it, she may make it true. Come, there's no nonsense there, is there?”

“I don't rightly see,” said the wife, a little puzzled. “But how's Mother Benning to act up and get a coach, in the name of gracious?”

“That's Mother Benning's business. You might as well ask me how your husband is to escape when his boat goes down.”

“His boat will not go down,” said the wife, with some agitation.

“There, you see, you prophesy again, not I. And you are quite right to take your prophecy instead of mine, because it's no use meeting miseries. The very words I used to Thirza Benning when your future came out with her own,” added Sarah, drawing one of her feet back for a spring, if necessary. But this time Alice displayed no anger.

“I do not see what call you had to mix up our names with your wickedness,” said she; “but if you are trying to frighten me, Sarah, you might know Alice Wybrow better. At least, you might remember that you tried to frighten Alice Stephens, and to frighten her out of a husband, too, but you could not do it.”

Sarah crimsoned with anger, but she retained her seat, and even her laugh, as she answered.

“Right, Mrs. Wybrow, very right. You beat me. And I am very sorry for what I did.”

“I did not speak it for that,” said Alice, her heart reproaching her for having taunted an unsuccessful rival. “We made friends again after my marriage; and, though you left the village, you said we did not part in anger.” And she held out her hand, but Sarah made no sign of taking it.

“I am very sorry for what I did,” repeated Sarah, “for I would not have made such a struggle to win John Wybrow, if I had known how short his time would be.”

Something in her voice gave weight to her words; and Alice, whose instinct was again to defy her tormentor, looked at her earnestly for a moment or two, sat down, and burst into tears.

“Those tears are not my causing, Alice Wybrow,” said Sarah.

“They are the tears of a wife who parted with her husband for the last time with words of bitterness.”

“I was very wicked,” sobbed Alice. “But,” she added, wiping her eyes, and rising with some spirit, “go away. It is not for you to take me to task, and John has forgiven me long ago, I know. Go away, please.”

“If he has not forgiven you now,” said the other, rising, and drawing a gay cloak round her, “he never will do it. I told you,” she said, sadly, “that I did not know how short his time was to be.”

“You have heard something. You have heard something,” cried Alice. “Now, if you smile like that, and say you learned it from heaven, I will do you a mischief. Dare—no, don't dare to say that—tell me the truth. Are you breaking anything to me by inches? Yes, yes. Sarah, Sarah! Speak out, speak out, at once.”

“I am afraid of your violence, Alice.”

“Don't be afraid of me—speak to me,” and she caught at Sarah's hand; “you have heard something?”

“Will you be calm if I speak?”

It was strange to note the effect which the practised voice of Sarah produced upon the poor wife. Its tones, now that it pleased her to put out her skill, were solemn and touching. That voice was her secret. But for that, a vulgar woman, almost ludicrously dressed, could have impressed no intelligent person.

“Will you be calm?” she said again.

“Yes, yes. There—now then—now.”

“To-morrow is Christmas Eve, and you are preparing your house to receive your husband. You hope for a happy Christmas together.”

“Please God,” gasped Alice.

“If it please Him,” said the other, “well and good. But if it does not, you will remember what I have said to you. If John Wybrow be with you on Christmas Eve, tell him what has passed between us, and laugh, once more, at the woman whose happiness was destroyed to make yours. But if he do not come, and if Christmas Eve be spent by you in lonely watching, and Christmas Day in tears and terror, go to Thirza Benning, and ask her what fortune came up for you as we made out hers. Do you hear?”

Before Alice could reply there was the mingled shout which announces the return of children to their home. Her three elder ones, Charley, of whom mention has been made, and two girls older than he, dashed into the cottage. There was more than ordinary eagerness in their manners, and each was evidently desirous to have the first word.

“It wasn't my fault, mother,” bawled Charley, resolved on setting himself right with the court of domestic justice at the outset.

“It was quite her own fault,” said the more dignified Nelly, the next in age.

“It was nobody's fault,” said the eldest, Rosa, with a precocity of genius for administration.

“What has chanced, child?” asked Alice, faintly.

“We couldn't find no crabs,” said Charley; “besides, it was very cold, and we went on the road.”

“Janet Benning would go with us,” added Nelly.

“And as we was playing and racing, a gentleman's carriage came by, and Janet would not get out of the way, but stood darning the horses, and when she did run it was too late, and she was knocked down.”

“But not much hurt, mother,” said Charley, “because the horse's knee kicked her out of the way, and we screeched, and the gentleman got out and took her up.”

“And has taken her away in the coach to Spindletown to be cured, and we're to tell Mrs. Benning.”

“The stars were right, Alice,” said Sarah, “but we read them hastily. Janet Benning was to ride in a coach—it was our fancy that she was to have one. Think of this, should John not return, and read the message they have left for you. Farewell, children. Heaven provides for the orphans, they say.”

She closed the door rapidly and was gone.

Let us follow her for a few moments, while Alice, her mind struggling up against belief in the words that had fluttered her heart, is alternately crying over her bewildered children and pushing them away that she may set herself convulsively to her house duties. She will be calmer when we rejoin her.

Her rival, for such indeed Sarah Fleming had been a few years before, paused, as she was about to take a turning leading from the village to the adjacent common, and directed a last look of

gratified malice towards the cottage where she had left astonishment and grief. But there was little to envy in her own fortunes. One of the handsomest girls in the village, and the daughter of a well-to-do tradesman there, she had scandalised her friends, in earlier life, by fixing her wayward affections upon the stalwart and good-looking young fisherman, John Wybrow. That the young man should have been flattered by this condescension on the part of Miss Fleming is probable enough, for even fishermen have their vanities. But to the rage and mortification of the wilful beauty, she soon discovered that his heart was given to a girl of his own station and the child of a man engaged in the same vocation as himself. She had not only stooped from the haughty height of the draper's shop to smile upon the humble fisher, but she had done so in vain. The fisher cared nothing about her, and even when, with his pretty Alice on his arm, he met Miss Fleming in her walks, it did not occur to him to shrink from her presence, and he used to pass her with as calm and respectful a salutation as if he were not aware of the tempest that was raging in her bosom. Poor Sarah, in her despair, was tempted to have recourse to one or two unworthy expedients for separating the lovers, but not only did they utterly fail, but in one case she was actually obliged to humble herself before Alice, and beg that a slander, devised by her in her desperation, might not be publicly avenged. The fisher was soon afterwards wedded to his pretty mermaid, and Sarah, unable to witness their happiness, departed to the manufacturing locality of Spindletown, where she was supposed to have friends. Here a cloud came over her history, and we have no inclination to raise it more than is necessary for explanation. Whether, originally, a weak head and a wilful heart, at once made her the tool of a worthless person of her own sex, who amassed considerable wealth at Spindletown and in its neighbourhood, by the private practice of the reputable pursuit called fortune-telling, or whether Sarah was placed under such a tutor by another of a still worse kind who had ceased to be interested in her, we are not sufficiently certain to state. But finding the careless, evil, and not unexciting trade exceedingly suitable to her ill-regulated habits and depraved mind, she adhered to it with some steadiness, and having mastered its cant, was well able to supply the place of her predecessor, when the latter was summoned to undergo a destiny which the stars had uncharitably concealed from her. So she was known throughout the district as a fortune-teller of some eminence; and not only did confiding ladies—maids endow her with cast-off dresses of an expensive kind—a fee which her vanity induced her to prefer to all others,—but women of some position were not ashamed to reward her maudering vaticinations with silver and with gold. The possession of an exceedingly fine voice (which had received cultivation during a period when she imagined herself calculated to become a brilliant actress—some said, from excessive sympathy with a brilliant actor) gave her a great advantage in her dealings with her dupes, and seldom have messages from the stars been delivered more becomingly than by Sarah Fleming. With purpose and perseverance, she might have become rich by her vocation; but the same wayward disposition that had first led her astray, misguided her through life, and her best clients were often disgusted to find that the sybil, instead of keeping her appointments with them, had strayed away from her home, and was seeking in low society, and not unfrequently in disgraceful excesses, that spiritualisation which the older astrologers thought essential to the successful pursuit of their science. Constant alone to her strongest hate, Sarah Fleming occasionally visited the house of the fisherman Wybrow, to torment Alice, but to torment herself still more. But on the day we have described, her visit to the sea-side village was made with a deeper purpose, and ended with a prouder triumph.

Wearily and in depression did Alice Wybrow discharge the household duties of that and the following day. She awaited the return of her husband—she expected it—and never could she admit to herself that the warning of Sarah was aught but one of the fictions at which Alice had so often laughed, or been indignant. It was true, and this grief incessantly came over her—no unholy superstition, but a true woman's sanctifying sorrow—that she had parted with her husband in anger. He had been in the wrong, and had been half ready to admit it, but the wife had pursued her advantage too far, and the masculine nature had rebelled, retorted, reviled. The fishing-boat was prepared for the last voyage of the year, and John Wybrow sprang on board her with taunting words from his wife about his unthriftiness, and the poverty to which he would one day bring her, snarling in his ears; and while his companions—embraced and kissed by wives and by children—went off as fishermen love to do, amid the kind wishes of those they leave, John Wybrow came alone and angrily on board; and the last sound he heard was the sorrowful cry of Charley, who, defrauded of his promised good-bye and embrace, lifted up his voice upon the shore and wept. So had John Wybrow sailed in the “Heart's Delight,” and his repentant wife bitterly remembered that so it had been.

“I did not mean it!” had been her word in the morning. “O, if I had not said it,” was her word at night, and fewer tears have watered heavier sins.

That night she was troubled, but not hopeless. Her dreams were not comfortless, and when she awoke, and in the stillness heard the plash of the sea without, and within the breathing of her children, she found better comfort. The great heart of the sea (not that the idea shaped itself to her in form) had something of sympathy with the beating of those little hearts; and the mother felt it, though she could not have said whence came the calming and assuring sensation.

The next day came, the Christmas Eve, and the wife, rising early, engaged in her household tasks with a certain alacrity and cheerfulness, which she insisted to herself on interpreting into omens of good fortune. The day was bright and clear, and the winter sun sparkled merrily on the sea. The cottage had to be finally prepared for the Christmas festival, and every pair of hands was put into requisition. The children's exuberant industry, indeed, had to be restrained rather than stimulated, and the high spirits of the domestic volunteers, who ever and anon adjusted some article of furniture, or arranged some homely ornament with express reference to “father's” comfort or approbation, in some degree reflected themselves upon the mind of the mother. Towards afternoon, Alice had as nearly banished the recollection of Sarah Fleming's prediction as they had done that of her parting words.

But night came, and not the father and husband.

Poor Alice, that was a dreary night for her. The prattling of her children, impatient for the return of their father, at length had begun to weary and irritate her, and she had nothing but exhortations to patience with which to reply to their reiterated inquiries. They had all but rebelled outright at the idea of being sent to bed before the arrival of the expected one, but had at last given way, tired with the exertions and excitement of the day, and the cottage was once more in silence. Again the occasional murmur of the baby at her breast, and the ticking of the old clock, were the only sounds that mingled with the plash of the waves.

But twenty-four hours of uncertainty and apprehension, expelled only by effort or by external influences, and recurring when these subsided, exhaust both mental and bodily strength. And it was the former that soonest gave way with poor Alice, accustomed to the ordinary hard work of a cottage life, but little used to have her mind disturbed by any consideration more important than the “rights and wrongs” of a neighbour's quarrel. She began to be exceedingly miserable. The fortune-teller's words returned upon her, and she was far less competent to repel their force than on the night before. They had an ally in the self-reproach that was in her own bosom. She had wronged her husband, and he had gone away

in anger or in sorrow. Perhaps she was to be terribly punished. Assuredly she deserved it. Such was her course of thought. And then came the fearful idea that there might be something, after all, in Sarah Fleming's predictions. The woman herself was jealous, spiteful, an impostor, and in broad daylight, and with an elastic heart, nothing is easier than to rid oneself of such an enemy. But wearied, alone, and self-reproaching, in the silence of night, Alice found the enemy gaining ground. The declaration of Sarah that ill-fortune was in store had been very solemn, and it had been unsought, may given in defiance of menace. What if she had really been commissioned to give it? And by whom? Nay, Alice Wybrow could not shape her apprehensions into definite form, and her education had been of the roughest. God was over us all, but wicked things were often permitted to have power; and strange sea-tales, told by her husband and his friends, came back to her in all their grimness. Even the accident to Janet Benning was in some sort foretold. What if Sarah Fleming had for her sins been permitted to have intercourse with evil spirits? There were such things—the Bible said that. Alice crept to bed, starting at every sound and flicker of the dying fire, and hid her head beneath the bed-clothes. After some miserable hours, she fell into an unquiet sleep. The village bells ringing in the Anniversary of the Nativity awoke her, and she had to explain to her children, who sprang from their sleep refreshed and vigorous, that it was Christmas Day and their father had not returned.

The cottage was ready for him, and no ingenuity could devise more work for that morning. Alice was but too glad to despatch the young ones to church, and to be left alone. A resolution had taken root in her mind, and she hastened to carry it out. What was the fortune which had been predicted for her? Sarah had bid her ask it of her neighbour, Thirza Benning, and this, in spite of all her valour on the previous day, Mrs. Wybrow had brought herself to determine to do. Those who know what solitary confinement in the presence of a single idea can effect, will feel little surprise at its working upon Alice Wybrow.

"A merry Christmas to you, Mrs. Wybrow," said Thirza Benning, as the wife entered the widow's slatternly home. "Sit down and let us drink good luck." And she laid hand, by no means for the first time that day, upon a bottle in a convenient niche in the dirty wall.

"By-and-by, please, Mrs. Benning," said Alice. "I came to know if you have got Janet back, poor child, but I see you have not."

"You might have asked me that yesterday," said Thirza. "I think, seeing that you caused the poor brat's misluck."

"Me!" exclaimed Alice.

"Yes, me," repeated the older woman, rather offensively. "If you had chose to let her be and not meddle with her own mother's way of dressing of her, which leastways was a liberty I should not have took with one of your's, she'd have been here this minute."

"Dressing Janet, Mrs. Benning! Why, I only lent her a pair of boots, thinking she'd cut her feet if she went with my children."

"Lent them!" repeated the other. "It was gave 'em, the children said, but that's nought, and if I thought fit, I dare say I could get my child boots or what I pleased."

"Why, of course you could," replied Alice, deprecatingly, "and surely I wouldn't take Christmas-time to offend you, of all times in the year."

"No offence," returned Mrs. Benning, with all a drinker's facile placability. "All I meant was, that you put her into boots that was too big for her, and so she stumbled and fell, and not a bad job neither; for she's not a bit hurt to speak of, and has made good friends. So here is your health, Mrs. Wybrow, and if you're friendly, you'll do the like."

Anxious not to quarrel, Alice tasted the proffered liquor, with the accustomed pledge.

"Maybe it's not so good as that you pulled out for the witch, when she came to see you," said Widow Benning, laughing.

"The witch!"

"Well, it's not civil to call her so; but witch she is, that Sarah Fleming; and in my grandmother's days, as came from Scotland, she would have been in a pond long ago, with her thumbs tied together, to see if the Old One would hold her up."

"Don't talk of her like that," said Alice. "Why, Mrs. Benning, you knew her when she was a smart young woman here."

"What of that? That's ten years ago and more; and I'm told the Old Gentleman finishes off his 'prentices quicker than that. Why, you look frightened." And again Mrs. Benning laid her hospitable hand upon what happened to be literally a fountain of Dutch courage.

"Frightened! Me!" said Alice. "Not I. She told me herself, that she had been with you, and had spelt you out a wonderful piece of luck. I hope you may have it, neighbour."

"If everybody's fortune comes as true as mine," said Mrs. Benning, "there'll be mourning in this place before long."

"Whose mourning," asked Alice, "if it's to be told?" She said it with some spirit, but she felt in a shiver.

"It's not to be told," replied the other. "But it's to be looked at."

"What do you mean, neighbour?"

"The witch left it for them as it might concern. She told me it didn't concern me, and I wasn't to open it, but you may if you like. It's only going through the door there, and opening the old box where I used to keep my onions, when I'd got any to keep. Yes, go and look at it, girl. Perhaps it'll be a bit of news for Christmas."

Alice, who had come to the cottage for the express purpose of doing what she was now desired to do, both feigned and felt a reluctance to comply. Despite her trouble, her instinct led her to endeavour to preserve her well-kept character for eschewing gossip and curiosity; and there was a superstitious feeling which withheld her, yet more strongly, from her object.

"What! you afraid of the witch, too?" cried Mrs. Benning. "That's a wonder now. As for a poor ignorant old woman like me, that hasn't even the sense to dress her own children" (the wound to her self-esteem still rankling, as it will in the poorest among us) "it mightn't be wondered at. But Mrs. Wybrow, who is so clever, and so knowing, and such a good wife as never was heard of—"

The words, half maudlin, as they were, stung Alice; and, with a slight laugh, expressive of anything but merriment, she said—

"Well, then, neighbour, now for the magic onion-box. I've heard of the magic bean-stalk, and, perhaps, we'll find an onion with a fairy in it."

She passed into the room at the back, and Mrs. Benning heard the heavy lid of the chest thrown back against the wall.

"Nothing here, but an ugly old bundle of cloth," cried Alice.

"That's none of mine," replied Thirza; "the box was as empty as the church money-box, with the spider's webs over it. See what's in the bundle, or bring it here, can't you?"

Alice tarried so long in the next room, that the widow raised her voice impatiently, and at last angrily, to know what she was doing. At last rising, between surprise and indignation, she made her own way into the other chamber.

And there she found Alice.

Down upon her knees, holding with clenched hands a piece of battered wood, which had been painted, and on which some letters could be traced.

Alice had traced them, and they made a word well known to her eyes. The word was evidently part of the stern of a broken boat, and the half-effaced words were HEART'S DELIGHT.

This was the gift that Christmas morning brought the wife of the absent fisherman. We will not sadden our Christmas morning by dwelling with her upon a scrow like her's. Leave her on her knees before that fragment of her husband's shattered boat.

There was a scene of scandal in the ordinarily decorous Spindletown on the Christmas Eve, and the magistrates and some other respectable persons, besides a good many who do not deserve the adjective, are making the examination of some prisoners a prominent feature in the after-dinner talk of Christmas Day. One of these gentlemen is at the head of his table, with a pleasant vista of children and intimate friends right and left, terminated by the vision of his wife, and the last new baby, who is brought to his first Christmas banquet. The magistrate is a tall athletic man, with large and strong yet refined features, and plenty of wavy grey hair. There is a general expression of gravity, almost amounting to sternness, upon the face, and in the piercing eye, when he is silent, but at a merry expression from one of the children, a friend's jest, or a cheerful thought of his own, a bright smile, beginning at the mouth but rapidly lighting up the fine countenance, makes you wonder how you could have seen anything but kindness and encouragement there. Too keen to be blinded by knavery, too just to be swayed by prejudice, too gentle to be harsh even with the guilt he punishes; such is the one of the magistrates of Spindletown. We seem to have seen such a man in our time, and now to look for him in vain, for his place knoweth him no more.

"And both are spending their Christmas in prison?" asks a guest, in continuation of the conversation.

"Poor things, yes," replies the host, "there was no choice. After all," he adds, the face lighting up with the smile that has been described, "a fortune-teller and her familiar might have been expected to know the almanac, and to avoid being taken at such an unlucky hour."

"Nobody thought of bailing them, Prior, I suppose?"

"I can't say. If he did, he kept his thoughts to himself, which was as well, because I should not have encouraged their expression."

"Yet that woman has some friends among the wealthier folks here, Charles," said Mrs. Prior. "My dress-maker says that she has seen her own work on Mrs. Fleming—of course she mentioned no names, nor would I have allowed it—but Miss Mantler's business lies among rich people."

"Much obliged to Miss Mantler for making one exception," returned Mr. Prior, "and I hope you keep her aware of the fact that she has done so, Ellen. But I don't think Mrs. Fleming will honour her with much more second-hand patronage. So long as she contented herself with deluding foolish ladies by retailing to them the stories she had learned from their servants, she might have gone on, I fancy, without much hindrance. But forging spoons is quite another story."

"Forging spoons, papa?" asked one of the daughters. "What did she do that for?"

"Why, you were very deep in the 'Abbot' the other evening, Isabel. What was the device by which Oliver got the keys from the old lady in the castle?"

"Roland, not Oliver, papa," shouted three or four eager students of Sir Walter.

"Very well, and when Mr. Horace has made the joke which I have left open to him—now Horace—a Rowland and an Oliver; what, you want? Indolent fellow. There, go on, Isabel, and tell us about the keys."

"Roland Graeme made some sham keys," said Miss Isabel, "and laid them down so that the lady might take them up as the real ones, which he secured."

"Well," said Mr. Prior, "this poor wicked Mrs. Fleming and a companion hit upon a similar plan to get at some valuable plate. A servant girl brought them specimens, and they had some cheap imitations made, which she was to place in the drawers instead of the real plate, evening by evening, until the transmutation of metals should be complete. But the girl, happily, had received a good education (I don't know whether she was ever told not to put both elbows on the table, Bob), and some of the teaching clung about her in the hour of temptation, and she confessed."

"The conjurors kept quite a manufactory for forgeries, according to the officer's evidence?"

"Yes, not quite a Wardour-street establishment, where you may order anything, a suit of armour of one of your ancestors, an altar cloth from any given Spanish Convent, or an egg of any bird whose eggs can be copied in the Museum, but still a very ingenious display. Mrs. Fleming used to deliver sham letters, hand over presents that were never sent, forge miniatures, and do all sorts of rogueries. Her accomplice owned to a very heartless deception of the kind—but suppose you youngsters go and get the magic lantern ready, or will any of you eat a few more boxes of preserved fruits, or anything else that is unwholesome?"

The happy young ones having departed on their errand, Mr. Prior narrated the story he had referred to. But if we were to tell it, we should be charged with repetition.

"Another kiss, Alice girl, and then you may sit down and laugh at my toggery as much as you like. Well, the clothes don't exactly fit, certainly, but if you knew how precious glad I was to get into them, or anything else, you'd have 'em hung up in memory of your being uncommon near a widow."

"But you never came on Christmas," said Charley, reproachfully. "Grandmother came, and cousin Nancy, and we had to hang up a misletoe over-night, and you ought to have kissed us all, and mother did nothing but cuddle the baby and cry."

"Did she though?" said John, brushing his huge coat-sleeve over his eyes. "Well, you were better off than I was, my boy, for you were under a tight roof, and before a fire, and with people as you love round you. Where do you think your precious father was?"

"Making jolly, somewhere, I'll be bound, with rogues like himself," said the old mother-in-law. But though it was a mother-in-law's speech, it was not said with one atom of a mother-in-law's manner; and indeed the good woman had only just left off crying for joy, and rubbing his sleeve up and down with her affectionate old hand.

"Under a cliff, mother, a great cliff there was no climbing," said Alice, eager to disburse the confidences her husband had made her in the shortest possible time. "And sitting, poor fellow, on the rock he had swum to, and not knowing whether he shouldn't be washed away when the tide came up."

"A regular cast-away, mother," said John in confirmation. "But somehow nobody's ever quite cast away, as one of the fellows that picked us up said; and it's a true word. 'Nobody's ever quite cast away,' says he, 'as holds by a cable with the anchor fast to a home.' But we were blown away uncommon, I can tell you that, old lady; and so here's your health, and a happy New Year to you, as I could not exactly drink it at Christmas. The old boat's not much the worse for her rap on the rocks, that's another good thing."

"Not much the worse, John!" said Alice in astonishment.

"Well, no, lass, not to speak of. I was canted out like a shot; but when she was picked up with Bill and Edward in the morning, she was sound enough. Lucky, too, that, for near where I was left, there was a very tidy bit of a boat knocked all to pieces in the night. Drifted from somewhere, I suppose. But the *Heart's Delight's* good for many a night's work."

"But she's lost her good name," said Alice, still bewildered.

"Lost her good name, has she?" repeated her husband, "I'd like to know why?"

"Because I've found it," said his wife.

"A Christmas riddle, I suppose," said John Wybrow. "I'm always stupid, always was. You keep the brains of the family for us, Alice."

"Riddle," said Alice, "my heart's too full for riddles, John, dear. Look here."

And she fetched the piece of battered word, over which we left her crying.

He looked at it for a minute or two, and then laughed a good fisherman's laugh.

"First, that wood's never been in salt water," he said. "All them marks is made with cold iron. And another thing is, that when the chap that made this got writing the name, he shouldn't have been too good a scholar, 'cause that's often as stupid as being too bad a one, I've heard. He never saw me spell heart with a *h* in it, though I know that's the right way, and you know, Alice, that it's not spelled so on my old boat."

"No, no, no!" almost screamed the wife, "it's hart, like a beast, and I never to think of that. O, Sarah Fleming! and you could come and taste of my cup, and look at my babies, and play me such a devil's game as this. I'm afraid to pitch it in the fire, John, perhaps its full of gunpowder to blow us all up."

The board snapped across the strong man's knee like a lath.

"Harmless enough, now," he said, tossing it upon the blazing fire; "and I'd like to serve the person as made it the same for breaking your heart for you, my girl."

"Mother's heart's not broken," said Charley, who was always ready with information at the shortest notice; "but mine is, because you didn't say good-bye to me, when you went away."

"Ah! how chanced that?" said his father, whose subsequent adventures had driven the afiray with Alice out of his good-natured head. "Let's see—mother must have come down to the boat without you, you being in mischief somewhere, and so—"

Let those who have the happiness to be admitted to a child's heart and confidence, and who know his manners and customs, decide whether Charley was likely to accept this solution of the question, and to allow the real state of the case to be forgotten. All that need be added is that what was not forgotten was forgiven, and that there was a happy night in the Fisherman's Home.

SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHRISTMAS EVE.—THE NEAREST WAY HOME.

(See page 638.)

"Now, the bridge, sir,—now the bridge, m'm. Mind the bridge, if you please. Sometimes it's slippery."

"Tight to my arm, Louisa my dear," said the curate, drawing his young wife closer to him. "And don't be in such a desperate hurry, Joe, that's a good boy. You have been running before us, for the last ten minutes, like a Will-o'-the-wisp."

"Perhaps Joe is eager to get home," said Mrs. Sandon.

"Some fun at home, Joe, eh? Why didn't you say so? I would have had Mr. Hopner's man to light us back. I never hinder a deserving lad of his sport, if I can help it. What is going on at your uncle's?"

"Tain't that, sir, thank you."

"What is it, then, that makes you in such haste?"

"Wanted to get out from these old ruins, sir."

"Did you? What for? Look at the moon, Louisa, through the broken old window at the top. If the sketch-book had not been dismissed in favour of baby-caps, there would be a bit for you. Hold hard, Joe, I say."

"It is indeed, beautiful," said Mrs. Sandon. "Look at the light on the trees, and the deep shade below. You must take me over those ruins, I am a capital climber."

"By and by," said her husband, laughing. "And now, Joe, we'll go on; and now just tell me why you wanted to get away from this place."

"You'll laugh at me, sir."

"Most likely, but that won't hurt you much, I think. It does everybody good to be laughed at sometimes. Now then."

"Well, sir, there's spirits up there," said Joe, keeping quite as close to his master and mistress as the rules of respectful behaviour permitted.

"Spirits,—what, ghosts do you mean?"

"Some of 'em's ghosts, and some spirits," said the boy, shuddering.

"A mixed party, eh," said the curate. "And they live up there, in love, like doves in a cave."

"Only on Christmas-eve, sir."

"You seem to know all about them, Joe. This is a scandal of my parish which I never heard of before. Suppose you and I go up and have a talk to them, while your mistress waits here with the lantern."

Joe's horror at this proposition was manifest in the quivering of the light in his hand, and the good-natured Oxonian hastened to relieve his mind by affecting to resign the notion. "But tell me all about these spirits, Joe," he added, "or else I really must go and ascertain it for myself. Come, stand here by me, where we can see the whole place. Not cold, Louisa dear?"

"Not in the least, Henry, if there is a story to hear!"

"It's not a story, m'm, any way I can't tell it like a story. My grandmother knows it much better than me, if you would be so kind as to call and ask her about it," said the artful page, endeavouring to evade his minstrel duty.

"But I would rather hear it from you, with the ruins before me," said the lady.

"Well, m'm, then begging your pardon for the wrong way I shall tell it," said Joe. "Grandmother says that some very wicked people lived in that castle hundreds of years ago. There was a lord and his seven brothers, and all his servants, and lords and ladies who came to see him. They danced and played cards on Sundays; and made mock preaching, and dressed up monkeys like singing boys, and worshipped a goat, and—"

"Never mind, Joe," said the curate, "I can understand that they were a wicked set. Go on."

"Down in the glen, sir, near where the broken gate is, there was a cottage. There were poor folk in it, but I think they had once been richer, and they had a daughter, a beautiful young lady, good, and kind, and charitable."

"Just like me, Henry," said Louisa Sandon in a low voice. Her husband pressed her arm, as if he had no disposition to deny the fact.

"The wicked lord fell in love with her, sir, and wanted her to marry him, but she would not hear of it, he being so bad and she so good. Besides, he was much older than her. But one Christmas Eve he sent his seven brothers to ask her to come to a great supper, and her father and mother thought she ought to go, as it looked neighbourlike and Christian."

"Sensible people! but they should have gone with her."

"The father was lame, sir, from a wound he had got in battle, and the mother always nursed him. So the young lady dressed in her best, and went up to the castle. It was very fine then, and all them rooms were full of gold and silver and shining lights, and there was music and dancing. When the young lady went in, all the other ladies hated her, because she was more beautiful than their painted faces and fine dresses, but all the lords and gentlemen fell in love with her. But the old lord, who was a dreadful strong, fierce man, declared that she was to be his wife, and that he would kill any one that touched her. So there was dancing and a great feast, and the young lady sat by the wicked lord, and was frightened by the wicked things she heard and saw. One thing was—"

"Go on with what happened," said Mr. Sandon.

"They were all drunk, sir, and the old lord called to them to



CHRISTMAS EVE.—THE NEAREST WAY HOME—DRAWN BY S. READ.

drink his new wife's health, meaning the young lady. They all shouted and screamed, and she cried out that she was not his wife and never would be, and would go home to her father. They all cried out that she should not, and she ran away all through the rooms that you see, sir, and they ran after her, shouting, and locking all the doors."

"Poor girl!" said Mrs. Sandon.

"They hunted her up and down till she was nearly tired, but she would not give in, and at last they came round her at that window" (and Joe pointed to the ruined window through which the moonlight was streaming), and 'Now,' says the wicked lord, 'I have got you, and we'll be married at once. Tell the black clergyman to be ready,' says he.

"The lady fell on her knees, and begged to be let go, but they only laughed and swore at her, and my lord laid hold of her, to drag her to be married."

"Exactly reversing the modern custom," said Mr. Sandon.

"O, let me go home," says the lady.

"That's the nearest way home," said the wicked lord, pointing at the window, and down at the cottage at the dreadful depth below, but never thinking that she would take him at his word.

"Then, that way I go," said the poor lady, and she jumped out of the window and was killed.

"They all set up a dreadful shout, sir, at her getting away from them, and the lord the most furious of all. But it was no use, and they turned back to the eating and drinking; and when they were nearly mad drunk, the castle burst out on fire in twenty places. They tried to get away, but they had locked all the doors to catch the poor lady, and nobody could find the keys. So they were all roasted to death. And what I've heard, sir," added the raconteur, sinking his voice, "is this, that every Christmas Eve they are obliged to do it all over again."

"But the poor lady, surely she has not to return," said Mrs. Sandon, actually interested in the history.

"No, m'm, she's an angel. But—but—" said Joe, hesitating.

"Out with it, Joe."

"It's only her likeness that is taken by—by—"

"A wicked spirit, I suppose, eh?"

"Yes, sir, *him*; and after they have hunted him, he turns round, and grows hideous, and hunts them, roaring all the time, 'The nearest way home—the nearest way home,' and then the fire breaks out. But grandmother can tell you a great deal more about it, sir, than I can."

"You've told us quite enough, Joe, and told it very well, and so come in and get your supper, as there's nothing going on at your uncle's. And remember this, Joe, whenever you think of that story,—there is not a word of fact in it from beginning to end, but still there is a truth in it, and that is, that wicked people are always punished."

"Especially if they are wicked to ladies," added the pretty wife, as Joe withdrew to the kitchen.

"You be silent, madam," said her husband, "and don't spoil my sermons. Would you have a clergyman hear such a story as that without adding a moral?"

S. B.

CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT

Dec. 20, 1856.

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GEORGE C. LEIGHTON.

WINTER.



E. DUNCAN, DEL.

GEORGE C. LEIGHTON, BED FORD SQUARE.

THE CHRISTMAS FARM-YARD.



E. DUNCAN, DEL.

GEORGE C. LEIGHTON.

THE HOLLY CART.